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THE WORLD'S GREATEST THINGS

ELWIN L. HOUSE

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST THINGS

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The World's Greatest Things

BY

ELWIN LINCOLN HOUSE, D.D.
Author of "The Psychology of Orthodoxy," "The Mind of God," "The Drama of the Face," etc.

Introduction by

BISHOP EDGAR BLAKE

OF

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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TO MY CHILDREN

Elmer E. House, and his wife Ethel,

and

Arthur E. House, and his wife Asenath

332400

INTRODUCTION

THE author of *The World's Greatest Things* has been for many years one of the most successful ministers of American Evangelical Protestantism. By early training a Methodist, by choice a Congregationalist, he combines a fine religious experience with an intellectual freedom and independence, that has made his ministry rich in creativeness and fruitful in spiritual results. Firm in his own faith, he is kindly and sympathetically appreciative of the difficulties of others. Always gracious and tolerant toward those with whom he may differ, his mission has ever been one of fine impulse to help others into the light. He is an over-shepherd whose main business, in recent years, has been to lead weary souls into green pastures and by still waters, into the ways of peace.

The World's Greatest Things is the fruit of Dr. House's years of pulpit and public ministry. "The World's Greatest Need: Spirituality," "The World's Greatest Battle: Flesh Versus Spirit," "The World's Greatest Sin: Selfishness," "The World's Greatest Asset: Character," "The World's Greatest Quest: Happiness"—these chapter themes reveal at once the humanness of the author's appeal, and the clarity and comprehensiveness of his insight into the real problems of life. It is a timely book on timely themes.

America is surfeited with prosperity. Mass-produc-

tion and standardized output have pretty nearly buried us beneath an avalanche of machinery and material things, until we are in danger of perishing from spiritual suffocation. We are discovering that the soul has rights and needs as well as the body. Wealth breeds disillusionment rather than contentment. We are unhappy and dissatisfied, in spite of our material blessings. It is gradually dawning upon us that we have been spending our money for that which is not bread and our labor for that which satisfieth not. The jazz age is passing; life that is only a syncopated St. Vitus' dance brings no permanent satisfactions. To twist and twitch and jerk, in saxophonic contortion, is neither art, ethics nor religion. It is primitive voodooism, a sort of blind atavistic impulse to return to an aboriginal state where the body was worshipped and the mind forgotten.

There are signs that our sanity is again returning. The soul is insisting on its innings. It is refusing to be content with thirty cent. movies and five cent. comic supplements, or even with high-powered motor-cars. The spirit in men has its insights and aspirations, its emotions and hopes, its longings and struggles that can only be satisfied in the realm of the spirit itself. The homely virtues of truth and goodness, that stirred the heart of simpler times, are richer and more fundamental to the wellbeing of life, than the hectic stirrings of restless emotions that bring forth nothing but foam and froth on the surface of life.

We are beginning again, the age-long quest after quietness and peace. Once more the cry is going up from multitudes of human hearts, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" For those who can discern

them, signs are everywhere that men are once more starting on their perennial pilgrimage after the Eternal. *The World's Greatest Things* will help many a reader to find his way into the heart of things, which is the heart of God.

EDGAR BLAKE.

Indianapolis, Indiana.

PREFACE

"I HOPE you may live many years to write books," says an able minister in a letter to me. Because of many such requests and the fine reception of my other volumes, I bring this book to the attention of the disciples of the Master.

A few years ago I preached four sermons under the general title, *The World's Greatest Things.* Talking over subjects with my brother ministers, this one appealed to them, hence this book and its chapters.

It is a book of devotion rather than a volume on psychology or science. It has a humanness which appeals to many aching, troubled hearts. It also has a warm, practical gospel of good-cheer, which is needed to-day. I am satisfied, from my wide and varied observation and conversation with men and women, that the kind of preaching that helps most, is that which touches man in his daily needs and tasks. The successful minister is the one of whom I hear it said: "He preaches a human gospel that helps."

Many of these addresses are compiled rather than original. They have their roots in forty years of ministry, reading, and consulting and advising with many splendid men and women.

I do sincerely feel that the need of the hour is more spirituality; a getting hold of what we can, and should believe, and a deeper devotion to the Church and its Lord.

I send these addresses forth with an earnest prayer that they may help, stimulate and vitalize our Christianity, and help the needs of seeking men and women.

E. L. H.

Hood River, Oregon.

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I

THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEED: SPIRITUALITY

"Those things which are most surely believed among us."
—LUKE I:1

THE world's needs are many. With many it is money, with others it is health, and yet with others happiness, success and friendship. But the world's greatest need, is spirituality. If we had this, it would cover all essential needs in one's life. A true perspective of life through spirituality would save us to-day. Robert Browning has a poem entitled, *An Epistle.* In it, a young doctor travelling through Palestine visits Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead. He observed that Lazarus was not terrified by the coming of the Roman army, as others were; but an evil look upon the face of a little child, telling of the activity of sin within, terrified him. He seemed to bring back from the other life a vision of the eternal. Lazarus was indifferent to many worldly things after having a glimpse of the other world. He was seeing things in their true perspective.

The age in which we live, needs to be less final of its own opinions; less assured of its own immediate sufficiency; less haughty in its judgments of the past, and it could be more patient in serving a longer apprentice-

ship before arrogating to itself an assumption of complete wisdom, in all matters affecting its own world. Objection could be raised to the method which has arisen among scholars of contending thought, that nothing is to be believed that cannot be rationalized. The weakness in rationalization is, that it is so difficult for the wisest of men to be sure that they know what they think they know. Education, divorced from religion, becomes self-indulgent, self-centred, anæmic and perilous to the world.

There is some truth in the statement that all around us are men whose minds are closed to all new truth. "Their souls are like a mediæval fortress with the portcullis down. To all the problems of our day they present a stone wall of preconceived opinion. They are men of the closed mind."

On the other hand, men of the open mind often become so fascinated with the new that they are swept over to its teachings before judgment is clear and true guidance is given.

"The new should come as an aid and not as an enemy; an enlargement not a belittling; an amplification not a denial of God. The Church needs a new soul more than a new system, noble dedication rather than new devices."

Through scientific scholarship, everything in life is insistently before us for interpretation and placement as we contemplate the scheme and order of things. We wish to know the results of thought, on all the sovereign questions of the hour and life. This position is legitimate but we must not be too fast in accepting all that comes to us. Said one great man to a group of young

scholars; "Wait until you get beyond your *Veal* period, before you accept or give out opinions that run counter to the teachings of the Word." No one can afford to tamper with any influence which threatens to injure the soul of man. The purposes of every true life break down whenever untruth sits in the saddle of the mind and to-day many are riding courses of philosophy and science to the loss of spiritual power and development. One of the calamities of the hour is, that young men and women who live Christian in their homes and go to college, come back having lost the radiance of Christian thinking and living. "Wisdom charms, growth in knowledge fascinates, but searching and finding truth is the supreme endeavor. Unfettered are our souls when once we come to an understanding of truth." If science and knowledge lead young hearts away from God, it must be true that they have not had the right perspective in their teaching.

President Glenn Frank speaks wise words when he says, "We moderns need, desperately need, spiritual leadership to save us from the sterility of our haste, our standardization, our rabbit-minded conformity, our almost perverted idolatry of organization, and our preoccupation with material things. We moderns need spiritual leadership to lift us out of the logic-chopping of theological debate, into a life of creative spirituality, a leadership that will think more of spiritual technique than of doctrinal definition. We need a spiritual leadership to help us to emancipate ourselves from our slavery of things and to help us to recover the lost art of meditation. We are too enslaved to things, we are lost in our baggage, and we are too busy."

Wise words for all, but especially to us preachers. We have become too public; "our daily calendars have become so crowded that we can rarely edge in an appointment with God, or ourselves. But we cannot forever wear our souls on our sleeves without their taking on a second-hand appearance." Here is the need of the hour: to move out of the spectacular of living to the quietness of truth; to get away from the crass, crude, dolled up, cock-sure style of living to humility and prayer. President B. I. Bell well says, "We worship the world, the flesh and the devil. To say this, is not to be a bigot or a Puritan, or a Victorian, or a mediævalist, or any other dreadful bogie. It is merely to describe, calmly and with charity, in terms of motivation, our scrambling hurly-burly of a century."

In this mad hustle for the new and novel, we ministers have been affected so that we preach on sex, sports, novels, and naughtiness. The petty, the unworthy has taken our time and attention more than is needful. We have lost our emphasis on soul-saving, admonishing, warning, presenting the higher and better things of our trade. Ministerial ingenuity is pushed to the limit to get something to attract the people. Why not come back to the tarrying in the upper room? Why not lift up the Christ more as a Saviour, a Comforter? Why not use the Master's plans more? I feel certain from much heart-searching and observation that our way out to better leadership, is in conforming to the New Testament orders and ways.

Our preaching ought to have a war cry in it. It ought to have a fighting note in it. Our approach, to-day, in our messages has been too superficial, too intellectual,

too doubtful and fearful. Zwingli said, "A Christian man's business is not to talk grandly about dogmas but to be always doing arduous and great things in fellowship with God." Bishop McDowell says, "The generation itself is disturbed, doubting and often wistful and only find its way out by making its faith upon Jesus Christ as its foundation, around Jesus Christ as its centre and with Jesus Christ as its living pattern and power."

May it not be true that the lack of churchly influence, to-day, comes from a lack of leadership in its ministers! H. G. Wells makes his hero in *Joan and Peter* seek an interview with God. He is wounded and delirious and he complains that the very men who set themselves to show the way to God do not help him to find Him. Many say here is the trouble with the ministry; confusion and hazardness about God, lead the people away from the Church.

Years ago I determined to preach a warm, human gospel, and never take doubts or challenging things about the Bible or Christ, to the people. There are some certainties of faith that we can preach. Luke began by saying, "Those things which are most surely believed among us—" What are these certainties that make for spirituality?

THERE IS THE CERTAINTY OF GOD. We should know Him if we are to preach Him. "I know in whom I have believed," cries the great intellect of the New Testament. How is it to-day? "Two students were walking through a dormitory of an eastern college. Along the wall in the corridor were several niches designed for the busts of eminent individuals. A student paused before

an empty niche, took a pencil from his pocket, and drew on the wall a huge question mark. His companion started in surprise and then asked innocently, 'Who's that for?' 'That,' said the first student, 'is for God.'" To-day, to many, God is a huge question mark. Why? Because of the lack of certainty in Christian preaching and thinking. Christian institutions, so called, allow their teachers to make God an unknown quantity, an algebraic X.

Phillips Brooks used to say: "Be sure of God. By simple, loving obedience, by purifying yourself as He is pure, creep close to Him, keep close to Him. Be sure of God and nothing can overwhelm you or drown you."

It is true that "with God the universe is full of mysteries; without Him, mystery is multiplied a thousand fold and darker than Egyptian night. One may believe that all parts of yonder ocean assembled themselves by accident, but only the fool will claim that the universe came into being with no intelligent supervision. We must begin with God. He is the only key that will unlock the universe. We cannot get ahead in our thinking unless we assume that He is."

Whenever the scientist, the biologist, the scholar, is led to disbelief, it is because his apparatus, his thinking, has come between himself and God. Such an attitude is possible, but it is one to cause regret and shame. To find one's self in the presence of a masterpiece and see no evidence of the master-hand that wrought it, is to be blind indeed.

"Suppose we stop thinking of God as a semi-material creature localized on a throne in a far away heaven. Suppose you begin to think of Him as a Mind and a Power for good permeating our entire universe, as that

reality which we call natural law permeates the stellar world. When we think of God in these terms it is not hard to believe that He holds and surrounds us all, and that in Him we human creatures 'live, move, and have our being.' Neither is it hard to believe that His infinite, all-compassing Mind knows what happens to each of us and forever strives to guide each one of us into the wise path of health and happiness."

Basil King says: "Suppose God is an infinite Mind, bathing me round and round with His thought as the sea bathes the innumerable objects within its depths. To such a God nothing could be small. No one thing would be further removed from His attention than any other. When an object is immersed in the ocean the ocean has no extra trouble closing round it. The object may be small as a grain of dust or as big as a battleship —to the water it is all the same. I am immersed in the Infinite Mind, closed round by it. It gives God no extra trouble to think of me, my work, and my desires. By the very nature of God's being He can do nothing else."

As long as one thinks of God as an impersonal force, he does not find the soul-satisfaction as when he thinks of God as personality. When you think of God as an impersonal absolute, it is not as though you said, "The Lord is my Shepherd." When you say "Thou who art eternal energy," it is not as though you had said, "Our Father Who are in heaven." A personal God is the personification of our highest hopes and aspirations.

THERE IS THE CERTAINTY OF JESUS CHRIST. Jesus Christ is not a mere memory; a character who has lived. He is not a disembodied spirit of another world. He is not a teacher of the past; He is NOW.

A few years after the Reformation, the authority of the Church began to wane. Then men appealed to the Bible. Now the Bible wanes with many. Then there came the authority of Jesus. What did He say? Now we are beginning to doubt the authority of Jesus. Just as long as Jesus is one of many teachers, the Church will have her little day and languish. But just as soon as she gets the authority of Jesus; when she is emphatic about Him, she will be on the right way to capture this world for her Master and God. There is a little book called *The Lost Radiance of the Christian Religion.* The suggestion of the book is that the Christian Religion once had a radiance all its own. It had. It began with the most radiant soul who ever walked the earth, Jesus. We will get that radiance back again, when we get back to Jesus, as Master and Lord.

In this country, we have "The Hall of Fame." Within it are one hundred and fifty bronze tablets, each seven feet long and one and a half feet wide. A committee passes on the names that are to be put on the tablets. Fifty of these could be selected in 1900, and five additional names can be chosen each successive five years, so that the panels could not be filled until the year 2000. So far, the number that can be put upon them has not been selected. Such names as Washington, Lincoln, Webster, Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, Clay, Marshall, Story, Grant, Lee, Farragut, Stuart, Emerson, Longfellow, Irving, Hawthorne, Poe, Mann, Audubon, Gray, Fulton, Whitney, Morse, Cooper, Peabody, Edwards, Channing, Beecher and a few others are there.

The Bible has a Hall of Fame. But there is only one great character there, that is JESUS. THE BOOK OF GOD

STARS HIM. "His Name is above every name." He is God's best to us, and we judge God by His best work. Some one has said, "Jesus is one hour of God on the earth."

When Washington Gladden gave the Noble Lectures at Harvard University, he showed the secret power of Dante, the poet; Michaelangelo, the artist; Ficthe, the philosopher; Victor Hugo, the writer; Richard Wagner, the musician; John Ruskin, the preacher, and then showed, that the secret power of all of these sons of genius, was the spirit that was in Jesus Christ.

Jesus wrote no music, no books, no laws, painted no pictures, sculptured no marble, but He lent power of thought and genius to all the great workers in these lines during the ages.

But this presents not the higher side of Jesus' nature, but the lower. Well does Dr. Charles R. Brown say, "There is a higher and a lower view of Jesus. The lower view presents Jesus as a great teacher, a perfect exemplifier of life, unselfish, full of kindness—a character of par moral excellence. He died on the cross to prove His fidelity to the cause he espoused. Men found more of the divine in him than in any other man."

"This does not rate him above the human category. He stands with other great men, Moses, Elijah, David, Paul and Martin Luther. The higher view regards Jesus as the embodiment of God, who fulfills for us the demonstration of God in flesh, one to whom men may pray and worship. Furthermore he becomes a vicarious Saviour for us, that 'we might not perish but have everlasting life.'"

"This lower and higher view have been racing to-

gether down through the years to the present time, and the lower view has lost out with the multitudes and in its influence and power in the churches. Those who have carried the lower view have done nothing in carrying forward the great missionary enterprises; have done nothing in getting great leadership; nothing in saving the mass of mankind. It lacks aggressiveness, warmth of message, deep convictions, earnest consecration and lofty movements for the bettering of mankind. In other words, THE WORLD REJECTS IT AGAIN AND AGAIN."

"To be sure it has a group of fine men and women of high moral character. It has had some fine writers of high merit, and it has had some influencing of religious thought and has helped to modify harsh dogmas of the church. But it has always been true that if you want to get the spirit of evil out of a man and the spirit of God into him, it seems that this higher view of Christ's person is needed to do the business."

A few years ago, there was a great evangelist in this country who moved multitudes and won them to Jesus Christ. Then, suddenly, he changed from the higher view of Jesus to the lower, and his power waned, and he no longer was successful. A few years later, he changed again, and came back to this higher view. When he came back, he did not come back to his old denomination, but to one known to be more conservative and orthodox. Asked why he did not come back to his old denomination, he said: "I was afraid if I did that people would think I had not made any change in my theology, and I wanted them to know that I had."

In the light of events and such experiences as this, why should the ministry tone down the higher view

of Christ which has given the Church and ministry power to reach the people and save them from their sins? President Northrop, of the University of Minnesota, said one time in my presence: "In the light of my studies, research and experience, if I could live my life over again, and was to be a preacher of the Gospel, I would preach Jesus and Him crucified."

"All that Jesus was in heaven or on the earth was put into what He did on the cross. All that man's moral nature needs doing for it eternally was done there." We do not preach Christ right until we preach the cross. It is here that the world's greatest need is met.

Again, THERE IS THE CERTAINTY OF THE SPIRIT. "When he is come—" He has come. "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come . . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and many signs and wonders were done by the apostles."

Frederick D. Maurice said, "I cannot but think that the Reformation in our day which I expect to be more deep and searching than that of the Sixteenth Century, will turn upon the Spirit's presence and life, as that did upon Justification by the Son."

Back of the Church and ministry is a vast invisible realm upon which we must depend. "Like the invisible frame work of structural steel that holds together the visible skyscraper, so all the visible kingdom has behind it or within it an invisible realm, the essential element in its strength and stability." The visible Church must be controlled by the invisible Spirit. The visible preaching must be controlled by the invisible unction and faith.

I really believe that Christians know more about God

and Jesus Christ, than they do the Holy Spirit. Here, often the ministry is opaque and the average Christian is "in the gloaming."

But we can never rise above the sensing of the Spirit. He who has not the Spirit in his consciousness will not have Christ in his conduct. We cannot measure right, preach right, legislate right, teach right or live right, without the Spirit.

We have got too professional, too worldly. We are depending upon training, organization, machinery, advertising, drives. These have a value, but we have forgotten the source of divine help, the Spirit within.

Worldly things, trappings, ritual, and programs, like the mighty monster in Hugo's *Toilers of the Sea,* wrap the coils of its tentacles around us of the Church and bind us. Like a vampire breathing forth the charmed atmosphere of promised success, it has sucked the spiritual breath out of our Church life.

Jesus began His work saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor." We need, to-day, the Spirit upon us that we may give the God-given message to the people. The Spirit has the secret which can be given to men that will make them right about face and leave their old way of selfishness and sin.

One great writer says: "The greatest danger confronting the churches of Christ now is the possible decadence of the pulpit. Let the pulpit decay and the cause of Christ goes into an eclipse. No power under heaven is equal to the power of a Spirit-filled ministry."

"Upon the walls of a mosque in Baghdad is this

motto: 'What a man believes he will die for; what a man thinks, he will change his mind about.' "

Because there are fanatical preachers, claiming the Spirit's power and bringing discredit upon the Church is no reason the rest of us should give up the rational, true baptizing of the Spirit upon us. America cannot be judged by its few fanatics, but by its real citizens. If the ministry will live in the major considerations of the Spirit, He will correct the disposition of others to magnify the minor matters of life. "The flower comes to fragrance and beauty through the workings of an invisible power." So the Christian unfolds, develops, gives forth under the power of the invisible Spirit.

Things have been multiplying so fast in this sense world that the inner life of the Spirit has been somewhat set aside. The automobiles, the movies, the radios, the various new pleasures and demands of social and business life, right in themselves at proper times, all, have given us the cheaper side of life in our work for the Church and God.

What profit is there in all this huge increase of things, if a man have not soul enough to make a life for God out of it? Why travel at the rate of sixty miles an hour in a *de luxe* train, or a hundred miles an hour in an aeroplane, if you are the worse for it at the end of the journey? What is the value of biology and science if it takes you away from a right life? The question of gain or loss is decided by what we do with these things in our living. The great discoveries may bring spiritual decay more rapidly to those who do not find the Spirit in them. We are being pressed hard to-day by the material and

the Spirit has been set aside by too many in the Church of God.

On one occasion, Marshal Foch was told that the Germans were pressing hard on one sector, and that the troops could not sustain the position. "You cannot hold on?" he asked. "Very well. Then you must attack." He gave the necessary orders and victory resulted.

The need, to-day, in this world, is for a strong attack by God's people on the forces of evil. The Spirit will give aid to this kind of work and save the land to Christ. We need the prod, the energy, the guidance of the Spirit, if we are to succeed. We can never succeed as an arrester of movement, as a brake on the wheels, as a conserver of the past, as a user of material, or new things alone. But we can succeed if we will follow our spiritual certainties.

Do not forget that it is the spirit that makes the mind big and worth while; that it is the mind which brings out the glory and efficiency of the body. What the movements of the bow and fingers on its strings are to the violin, the human mind and spirit are to the body. A divine touch makes the body glow and testify of a divine power within, as evidenced in the Christian preacher, the Christian singer, the Christian worker. The miracle of the power of God is the body of man in its many workings, going forth under the dominion of the Spirit of God.

II

THE WORLD'S GREATEST BATTLE: FLESH vs. SPIRIT

"For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary one to the other."—GAL. 5: 17

VERDUN was the chess-board of the World War, where Petain played a great battle-game with Ludendorff, Hutier and the German Crown Prince. Whole armies were the pawns in the game, and the stakes were world-power and national existence.

The battle began February 1916, and was still raging the next July. Five hundred thousand Frenchmen lost their lives and about as many Germans died in what the Kaiser called, "the kolossal attempt."

Many reserves were called up and hurled against the steel wall of Verdun. Forts changed hands twice or three times a week. Men fought with their fists, kicked and bayoneted one another. It was the most frightful hand-to-hand engagement known in modern warfare.

General Petain's *on ne passe pas* ("they shall not pass") electrified Paris and filled the world with admiration for the peasant soldiers of France, who barred the road to the land behind them where their farms and the great city were located. Some claim this as one of the world's greatest battles.

But was it? It may have been a great battle, but it

was not the greatest battle of the world. That is being fought every day and in every life. What is the World's greatest battle? The text gives the answer; it is, the warfare between the flesh and the spirit.

In Chicago Art Museum, there is a statue by George Gray Barnard. It represents two men in desperate struggle, one bending over the prostrate form of the other. In that life and death struggle, drops of sweat like beads, and muscles like whipcord stand visibly on the face and form of both. Chiselled on the bronze base and giving the artist's thought, are these words of Victor Hugo: "Behold, I feel two natures struggling within me."

Man is a double creature. He is an animal, a being of flesh, with animal appetites, passions, instincts and forces—a physical organization adapted to the wants and uses of his earth-life. He is also spirit, made in the image of God, with faculties and aspirations that fit him for fellowship with God, and association with the spiritual universe. The spirit-man rides an animal of flesh, and is often thrown and trampled under foot. There is a lower man, having all these appetites and passions that sustain the physical organization, but placed thereupon, is a spiritual man with reason, moral forces, and faith. The union of the two means strife and conflict, the doing what one would not do and the leaving undone what one would do. The poet has described this situation by saying, "The devil squatted early on human territory, and God sent an angel to dispossess him." The animal nature foams out all manner of passions and lusts. From thence issues only lurid lights and murky streams. But the under man is not the true man. The

soldier rides the horse, but is himself other than his beast. Man uses an animal at the bottom, but man is what he is at the top.

The flesh uses the senses to mar the spiritual power. It presents to the eye what will inflame evil passions; it appeals through the taste to appetite. The spirit speaks through the conscience and appeals for clean living. These two are as far apart in their ideals as light and darkness. The battle is whether the spirit or the flesh shall rule. Our lower nature has been indulged and so has grown strong, while the spiritual nature has been starved and is not rightly accepted. A soldier's epitaph which sums it up for us, reads as follows:

> "Here lies a soldier whom all must applaud,
> Who fought many battles at home and abroad;
> But the hottest engagement he ever was in,
> Was the conquest of self with the battle of sin."

The problem of life, then, is for the upper man, the spirit-man, to educate, control and transmute the lower forces into sympathy and service for moral power. The spirit loves truth, but the body tempts man to break truth. The spirit loves honour but passion tempts it to deflect to wrongdoing. "Man goes forth in the morning with all the springs of generosity open; but before night selfishness has dammed up the hidden springs. In the morning man goes out with love flowing from his face; he comes back at night sullen and black with hatred and enmity. In the morning the spirit is like a young soldier, parading in stainless white; at night his garments are begrimed and soiled with self-indulgence and sin." Just as there is a line along the tropics, where two zones

meet and breed perpetual storms, so Paul says, there is a middle line in man, where the animal man meets the spiritual man, and there is perpetual storm. There clouds never pass away, and the thunder never dies out of the horizon of earthly time.

It is very evident Paul had felt the tug and battle of these two natures within himself, for, in Christ Jesus, he had seen himself. There was something back of him in his ancestry. Blue blood was in him. But now, in the light of God's truth, he saw that not much good dwelt in him. All that he had inherited from his ancestry was unprofitable. His mind of flesh was enmity against himself and God. He also found his flesh to be a rebel, a traitor fighting against the better life within. He saw that the battle of life was inside, between two contending powers, the Spirit of God and the flesh of man. Paul also saw that "the man in Christ is not of the flesh, but the flesh is in him, and the problem of salvation is to conquer the flesh, so that a man may live in it, and not be overcome by it."

Some of the natives in Australia take a yearly holiday, going off into the bush for a month to celebrate "corroborree," and then return to work. The black fellows revert for a time to the state in which they were before the white people appeared. Their clothes are abandoned and hid in some hole where they can find them when the spree is over. They arm themselves with bows and arrows, hunt the kangaroo and wallaby, and gorge themselves in flesh. When the holiday is over they resume their clothes and return to their master's station and take up their work. Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is a marvellous picture of human nature, whether it be

a duel between the flesh and the spirit of a Paul, or an Australian black-fellow.

Thus we see that every man has in him two selves, a higher and a lower self. A bad man has his better self. If there is a devil in man, there is also an angel, and Christ never missed the angel. When temptations are away and a man is quiet and thoughtful, he does many kind acts that can be approved. It is dangerous to represent to man how near he is to the beast, without, at the same time, showing him his possible nearness to God. It must be noted, again and again, that bad men have some good in them and perform many acts of kindness. The teaching of mother, Sunday school, service clubs and example, bring forth kindly deeds from bad people.

A good man has his lower self. The human saint is far removed from the angel. The body and its appetites are with him, and there are times when the spirit life is dull and feeble and passion seizes him, and like David, or like Peter, sudden temptation lays him low.

> "There is so much good in the worst of us,
> And so much bad in the best of us,
> That it ill behooves any of us
> To find fault with the rest of us."

It has been said, "In every life there are three regions: that of the light, where duty is clearly defined; that of the dark, where wrong is no less clearly marked; and a great borderland of twilight, where there is no certainty, where dividing-lines are not distinct, and where each man must be fully persuaded for himself. It is here, however, that the temper of the soul is tested; here the decisions come that are to make us weak or

strong. Here we may drift into the dark, or start a path of upward climbing that will conduct to the table-lands where the light never wanes. In threading a way through these difficult, devious ways, there is no clue so helpful or certain, as to ask ourselves what will conduce to the glory and praise of God. All that would hinder this must be avoided; all that would promote this should be accepted."

Plato pictures this battle of soul and body under the figure of a many-headed monster—a lion and a man combined in one form. The man represents the higher nature, the reason; the lion represents the passionate, brutal element, with passions and appetites. Only when man rules, is all well.

In each one of us, there is a dual personality, and there are two combatants in a fierce struggle. Beecher says, "It is as if there were two bands of soldiers quartered in one tenement, having an upper and a lower story. On the ground floor is a company of brawling, drunken, unruly, cruel men; and above them, in the second story, is a company of soldiers that are gentlemanly and courteous. The brawling soldiers below may govern the house; and then they will have a hard time upstairs. Or the upstairs may govern the house, and then there is manhood and peace. Or there may be a conflict going on all the time, and there never will be peace in the house."

Both the downward and the upward tug is in man. The downward tug never ceases. Paul gives us the truth of this philosophy when he says, "The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do . . . I find a law, that, when I would do good,

evil is present with me." The downward tug never ceases. This is a principle which scientists call "the law of degeneracy." There are elements at work in us, the natural end of which is to turn human development into a backward current and reduce it to a lower order.

That there is an upward tugging is also true. God has not forsaken us, and by His Spirit and grace, He is trying to lift us up and get us over into the true life, where the Christ victory may be in a soul.

We find our heart's desire only as we follow the higher call and tread under our feet the baser nature. The salvation of the personality lies in throttling the baser man and fighting him to death.

After one of Napoleon's great battles, he had a medal struck off and on one side was the name of the battle and on the other side were these simple words: "I WAS THERE." Reader, this is true of us; I was there. If we are there NOW, God help us to gain the victory!

And God will help us if we will let Him come in as our aid. Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe,* was my favorite novel as a young man. The Black Knight, always kept me anticipating and believing for victory. So it can be if we read the Word, there is the Knight Jesus, always ready to deliver if, in humility, we ask forgiveness and seek His favor.

This age is spiritually decrepit. It is halting, languid and feeble in spiritual things. It is a time in which there is much to praise; a time of discovery, and time of fine unfoldment and great material development; but it is not the age of the spirit. "It is an age of feet not wings, of head not heart, of pleasure not sacrifice, of money making not spirit getting. To keep a pure heart

and make a clean life is growing increasingly difficult. The pressure for more license is seen in our magazines, current fiction, movies, popular art, dress and manners, until it requires courage even to speak out for the rights of the spirit against the seductions of the flesh."

Henry Drummond says: "Probably most of the difficulties of trying to live the real Christian life, arise from attempting to half-live it." To illustrate: What shall a man do with Sunday? Shall he pretend to keep it, or shall he go to church in the morning and play golf in the afternoon? Shall he go to church during the cold weather and take a rest in the hot weather? What shall we do with the church? Keep it up for the sake of appearances, or let it go down into decay? No man will allow himself to be slowly asphyxiated with poisonous gas if he be in his right senses. But men will suffer their spiritual life to be daily suffocated with the deadly pressure of worldly interests, by refusing to heed the spiritual call. Always, the demand is for more money and more chance for pleasure. How about God and spiritual food? "There is a little plant in my soul called reverence," said Oliver Wendell Holmes, "which I like to have watered once a week." But, if one will not water it, presently it wilts and withers away.

Suppose all our sins, and weaknesses were to be brought out on our foreheads and faces? What a stampede it would make for cosmetics and coverings of some sort. Suppose a photographer could photograph the heart as it really is! Do you think he would be able to find any one willing to have such a picture taken? Suppose the picture you have had taken, really revealed all of you, would you send them around? We are not

any too good, the best of us. Sin battles within and we are still making the fight between the flesh and the spirit. But such thoughts ought to sober us, and help us to make it a good fight of faith and spirit.

GOING OUT OF THIS WORLD WE WILL TAKE NOTHING WHICH REPRESENTS THE FLESH-LIFE. We are told that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." We shall take out with us our soul culture. We came into the world with possibilities, we shall go out with facts. At harvest time, the man who sows to the flesh has no more reason to expect that he will reap the fruits of the spirit than the farmer has to expect to harvest wheat from the sowing of tares. It is said "that the boy is father to the man." If that be so, then the man is but the boy, having brought forth after his kind.

What, then is the important thing in this battle? TO SOW TO THE SPIRIT; TO HELP THE SPIRIT. HOW CAN WE SOW AND HELP THE SPIRIT?

WE HELP THE SPIRIT WHEN WE ACCEPT THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD. The Gospel is arranged with special reference to man's disordered nature. It appeals to the spirit, not to the flesh. Its design is to come to the captive spirit and help it. We are told that "the law of the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus, makes it free from the law of sin and death." There should be no doubt as to which of these two forces, flesh and spirit, is the stronger, and as to which is to win in the end. The Bible not only tells us that the spirit is to be victor but gives us examples. Which would you the rather be, —Ahab or Elijah, Nero or Paul, Peter or Judas, Jezebel or Ruth?

With God working within, and for us, the spirit

gains the day and the flesh becomes servitor. Happy the man who holds this faith, for it will make him stronger for his own conflicts and an inspiration to many a man who has fallen and lost hope. Sometimes it may seem in our battle with the flesh that the fight is a hopeless one. We see our many failures and the onslaughts of lust, greed and pleasure rushing fully armed against us. We see so many routed and defeated ones that we feel that it is almost hopeless to fight on. We have lost hope only because we have been looking the wrong way. THOSE WHO ASCEND TO THE WORD OF GOD AND PRAYER AND SURVEY THE CHRIST-DELIVERER, will get victory in their souls, and their fight will be victorious.

When the battle of El Caney was in progress, General Chaffee, coming along the trenches where the bullets were zipping in every direction, saw a soldier lying face down in the trench. He called to the soldier, "Why are you lying there?" He answered, "I am scared." "What business have you in the army, if you are scared like that?" and when he saw the face of the man, he saw he was a mere lad, eighteen years old, who ought to have been home with his mother. Again the General spoke and he said, "I would like to find the man that put you into the army. But now it isn't half as dangerous as you think it is. Just stand up by my side, and I will stand by you." Then this weak boy stood up by the side of his great General, and, at his direction, trained his gun and fired point blank into the air. "That was pretty good," said the General, "but your hands are trembling. We will try again. Lower your gun a little more." The lad lowered his gun a little more, and, this time fired straight ahead. When the

retreat was ordered a little later, the General had to take the boy by the collar, and drag him away. He had become a soldier because the General had given his strength to his weakness.

God, our General, is saying, "Strengthen ye the weak hands; confirm the feeble knees. Say to them who are of feeble heart, Be strong." We can never rise above the inward. He who has not the Spirit in his consciousness will not have Christ in his conduct. We are efficient in the grace of the Spirit of God. Wordsworth speaks of a child, who by constant companionship with nature, caught its subtle beauty, and was changed into corresponding beauty. So we shall be changed into the image of Christ by constant association with the grace of God.

WE HELP THE SPIRIT WHEN WE ATTEND THE MEANS OF GRACE. Does it help the boy to attend public school? Does it help the man, who desires to be a good physician, to attend the medical college? Does it help the woman, who wants to be an efficient teacher, to attend the normal school? All important are these means of help. So is it with the House of God, the uplift of the Sunday school, communion with the Word, and prayer to our Master. These qualify and stimulate the spirit in us. Feeding on these things makes for spiritual nurture and growth. We generate power while in the presence of the spiritual, and we distribute it by holy living and doing.

HOWEVER LONG WE MAY DEFER THE DECISION OR THE BATTLE, THERE IS A TIME WHEN WE MUST GATHER OUR OWN HARVEST. Christ said the harvest was to be at the end of the world.

Many years ago, there was an infidel in Ohio, who

did not believe much. In order to test the Holy Sabbath, he selected ten acres of his land for a test of that commandment. He ploughed this field on Sunday. He cultivated it and planted it on Sunday. Every bit of work done on that piece of land, even to the husking of the corn, was done on Sunday. At the end of October he discovered he had more bushels to the acre than any other man in Ohio. Sitting down he wrote an article to the *Toledo Blade,* setting forth the thought that God cared nothing for such a commandment and that he had demonstrated it in his corn patch and gave the facts as stated to prove it. The paper printed the man's article, but at its close, the editor put in a paragraph of his own between two finger points which read, "Remember my brother, God Almighty does not always settle His accounts in October."

"God is long suffering to usward, but He will not delay forever." While the Bible is full of the mercy and goodness of God, it also shows us that retribution that came again and again to those who refused His mercy and love.

We have read of a thief whose dark lantern was flashed upon a crucifix hanging in the room. No theft for him with that Divine Face looking at him, so he turned the crucifix with its face to the wall. Many a man turns his conscience away from God. And many a man turns it back again to God and listening to its pleadings, gives up flesh and follows spirit. Such an one finds the victory of life.

III

THE WORLD'S GREATEST TEMPLE: THE BODY

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"—I COR. 3:16

THE most famous temple of olden times was Solomon's. It was built of gold, silver and precious stones, of cedar, and fir, and other costly woods. A large army of men spent seven years in building it. The Hebrews saw in it, a symbol of God's presence and nearness to His people.

St. Peter's, in Rome, was built during the Christian era, and is considered the greatest of all religious edifices to-day. The foundation stone was laid in 1506. Forty years later, Michael Angelo became its superintendent at the age of seventy-two years. He designed the dome, and when he died at the age of ninety, the most difficult part of the work was completed. The building was finally dedicated in 1626, one hundred and seventy-five years after its being planned in 1450. The dimensions of this great temple are:—613 feet long, 450 feet across the transcepts and 454 feet from the pavement to the top of the cross. It is supposed to be reared on the spot where St. Peter is buried.

St. Paul's, London, is the largest Protestant cathedral in the world. Great churches have stood upon the spot

which it now occupies since the year 610 A. D. Fire swept away one building after another. The St. Paul's of to-day was designed by Sir Christopher Wren, who submitted his model to the king in 1673. The cathedral is 460 feet long, 240 feet wide, and 404 feet high. The dome, is the most magnificent object of the kind in existence.

But grand as these, and many other temples are, the greatest temple of this world is man. Every human being is a temple that is full of strange and beautiful rooms. Solomon's temple is considered wonderful because "there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." But think how much more wonderful is your temple! God is the Architect of your building that builds you from a baby to a man. But you are the Architect's assistant, and God cannot carry out His plan for a perfect temple unless you work with Him.

As you go into some one of these great temples, to-day, the thought that "God is in His holy temple" fills you with awe. But the truth is that God is in the temple because you are in it. You brought Him there when you entered and when you depart you will take Him away. Your body is really His temple more than the church. He will live in you as long as you live.

Some temples are most interesting things to see. If Solomon's temple were still standing, every one who could would wish to see it. If you could not see it you would read about it. Millions of people, to-day, have visited St. Peter's and St. Paul's Cathedrals, and become enthusiastic over them.

We do not think enough about the human temple.

A few great men who have studied the body have exclaimed with David, "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."

If a house is being built near your home you like to watch the workmen putting up the frame, filling in the walls, making partitions and finally plastering and putting in the windows and painting the outside. But if you will watch a child until it grows up, you will see nature building her building, and you can learn about the frame, the living walls, the curious partitions, the windows, the doors, and many other things far more interesting than any building being put up by man.

On one of the walls in the Library of Congress is this inscription: "There is but one temple in the universe, and that is the body of man." We touch heaven when we lay our hand on the human body.

Our temples are not built of wood, brick or stone, but of cells. The tree is made up of living cells. That is why it grows. Stones and brick do not grow for they have no cells. The human temple grows because of living cells. A cell is a living body that breathes, eats, moves, grows and gives off to other cells and dies.

Thousands of years before we knew anything about the telegraph system, God had put it into the human body. And there was a perfect system of communication from the brain to the tips of the toes, to every muscle, to every bone, to every cell. "It is said that the human brain is such an intricate labyrinth of nerve paths, that it takes years for the student to become superficially acquainted with it."

You could not live without the brain. It is the brain

of man that places him above the animals. The liver of the dog or the horse, is just as remarkable and just as perfect in structure, as the liver of a man. And this is true of the stomach, the lungs, the heart and the kidneys. But the brain of the dog or the horse, is far less complex and far less perfect than that of man.

Somewhere among the hidden chambers of the brain, is your *sanctum sanctorum*—your sacred place, your own private, secret room where you live so long as you have need of the body temple. Without this place you would be no higher, no more responsible than any other creature.

This *sanctum sanctorum* we call the spirit of man. But before we take this up we ought to look at the thinker within the temple. It is a truth which we all recognize that we cannot have a thing in the hand, until it has first been in some one's thought. History is simply the projection of human thought on the stage of action. "All we see in art or commerce, in industrial science, invention, or manufactory, can be traced back to the realm of ideas and has its mental equivalent and cause. Thought is always the parent to the act." "The key to every man," said Emerson, "is his thought."

"Let every man understand that no man ever really fails until he mentally sides with failure and accepts defeat. Of course your plans fail, your schemes miscarry, and your enterprises suffer defeat. But you are other than these, and until you elect to identify yourself with them, you may stand four-square to all the winds that blow."

"Let every man or woman who has failed on the moral field, mentally refuse to be identified with that

failure. Deny that it represents your true self. This is to repudiate the lower self and all its works. That self is not you. If it were, you would not be separable from it. But the separability of a man from his lower nature, is one of the glories of New Testament truth. The separation however, must first of all be effected in the mind. This is why Christ said: 'If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself.' The higher self, the essential self, is to deny, to disown, to repudiate, to refuse to be identified with the lower self."

"The great system of redemption is built upon the fact that sin and the sinner are not identical. A medical man would never dream of confounding his patient with his disease, and here is where the medical men fail. They have not sufficiently impressed their patients with this distinction, so as to enlist their strength of mind on the side of health as against disease. They have not attempted in gaining as an ally, the mental force of their patients, so as to have the weight of healthy wholesome thinking cast into the scale of recovery, as against the morbid thought of disease and death. Once they succeed in this, it will be found infinitely more effective in combating disorders than their most potent drugs. Christ never confounded the sinner with his sin, nor must we, either in our lives or in those of others."

Do not forget, then, that in the mind, battles are lost or won. "If men think purely they will live purely. If they think dishonestly they will live dishonestly. If they think whiskey, they will drink whiskey, and the conquest of drinking as of every other vice, is to be achieved by the conquest of thinking." An unclean

mind will be sure to spill out smut, and bring forth coarse, vulgarizing speech that cheapens life.

In this temple there is a soul. The Book says, "In man there is a spirit." "It is spirit in man and the breath of the Almighty that giveth him understanding." Pascal has said: "Man is only a reed, the weakest reed in Nature; but he is a thinking reed. It needs no universe, but only a vapour or a drop of water to kill him; but when the dead universe crushes him, man is still more noble than that which kills him, because he knows that he dies, while, of the advantage which the universe has over him, it knows nothing."

"When Socrates lay waiting the hemlock that was to end his life, his friend Crito asked him, 'How shall we bury you?' 'In any way you like,' replied Socrates, 'but you must first get hold of me, and take care that I do not run away from you.' Socrates' witticism is his confession of faith that the mysterious Something, the spiritual energy that calls itself 'I,' 'me,' is not identical with that lifeless form of clay; it has eluded the grasp of death."

The body is but the instrument, the temple in which the soul lives. When I say "I am a soul," the real door of life opens. When we proceed to question this soul, it says, "I am—I exist." This may not seem to carry very far. You pick up a stone and it exists. But can the stone say that it exists? It is only you who say it for the stone. The stone does not know that it exists. But you know—you have the power to think the thought of your own existence.

"Long ago in the history of religion a great discovery was made to the soul of a lonely man. 'Whom shall I

say that thou are?' he asked of the Voice that talked with him in the vision. And the Lord said unto Moses, 'I AM THAT I AM.' That revelation was one of the most profound in the world's history, for it revealed that God was a Person, the great 'I AM.' The soul of man alone shares the fellowship of God in this; it too has the power to say, 'I am I.'"

As we proceed to question further, passing out with that first response comes another. It is this: "I AM MYSELF AND NOT ANOTHER." The soul shows me my own self and my self speaks from behind closed doors and has a life which no other soul can invade or violate.

And as we move on there is a further response from the soul as it says: "I am myself behind all my experiences. I love, I hate, I laugh, I weep, but I am not the love, the hate, the sorrow, or the joy. There could be no love, hate, joy, sorrow, unless behind them all there were an I."

As I move on in my thought I hear Christ summoning me to obey the Divine call. Why summon *me*, if I am jetsam or flotsam drifting on the tide of fate? I hear the Master saying, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." But if the soul is merely the outcome of a dream, then that command is cruel mockery.

But God will not let me go. Because I have made myself unfit to be His child, by my failure and sin, He comes to me with outstretched hands and offers me forgiveness and bids me repent. Can God forgive a mere vapour, that appeareth but for a little while, and then vanisheth away? It is in a moment like this, that the soul most truly finds itself—comes to itself.

Whence comes the soul? What did Carlyle say:

"We emerge from the Inane, haste stormfully across the astonished earth, and plunge again into the Inane. . . . But whence? Oh, heaven, whither? Sense knows not; faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God to God."

"From God?" That is the question. Let me question the soul again. Can you give me any hint about yourself? When it resumes its confessions, I hear it say, "I wonder, I long, I aspire." How far do these words carry us? They carry us to the place where God says: "He hath set Eternity in men's hearts."

St. Paul who speaks for God, answers the question plainly when he says: "In Him we live and move and have our being." "Ye are God's husbandry," answers to the cry, Whence cometh the soul? He is "The Father of our spirits."

Perhaps the first great religious thought about the body is that it is the instrument by which the soul comes into possession of the outer world of nature. The body is not the soul's prison house, as Plato suggested; neither is it a clog, a drag upon the spiritual life, and the seat of all that is sinful. It has been the chief incentive to human progress.

The soul is out of fashion with some scientific men. It is due to the modern revolt against mediæval thinking and partly to the problem itself. "But in the main the soul has not been so much refuted as ignored, passed by, snubbed."

In spite of the general agreement that the soul has departed, it is coming back to-day with a rush that is good for religion and Christianity. Paul, Aristotle

and many other scholars saw in the soul a life principle, a subject of all our experience, an agent of all our doing, but above all a substance. This substance was "the consciousness of personal identity." "This made for moral responsibility and home for spiritual values." "As agent, it was the vehicle of freedom. As permanent substance, it was capable of mystical communion with the Divine Substance and of immortality." "The soul was almost killed by the smugly brilliant nineteenth century." But the twentieth century will see it restored to its proper place once more as personal identity of the temple in which man lives.

Your soul is what you are, above and aside from your body and your mind. It was that which was breathed into your unformed substance to make you a man, distinguished from the brute. When Paul says: "No man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of a man which is in him," he is speaking of man's spiritual ability and his inner personality.

We know that a man can be born into the experience of the flesh life, and then into the experience of the mental life. We should know the greatest truth, that a man can be born into the experience of the spiritual life.

When a man is born into race consciousness, he is a living soul. When he is born into God's consciousness, he is a living spirit. Carnal man is destitute of the spirit (soul) save in the rudimentary form of conscience. Higher life is engermed within, but it must be vivified by the Holy Spirit, if he comes to the spiritual possession of his real relationship to God.

Created by the age-long travail of Spirit for spirit, the body is the vehicle, the essential instrument by which the soul lives its life here below.

The Bible eulogizes the body more than you realize if you have not studied it carefully. The body has been the slave of sin. But it can rise up to be the servant of the spirit. Paul says: "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown in dishonour; but it is raised in glory."

One has helped to put a right estimate on the body when he regards it as an institution to be kept under the control of the will. Its appetities and passions are legitimate and are intended to serve a wise purpose in the human economy. But we must never forget that they are under the will, being commanded to do the right and not the wrong.

What has the body been doing that it should suffer so? Done nothing of itself; for of itself it can do nothing. But it is and has been what the serpent was—the agent of a fearful, misdirecting power from within or without. The body, self-moved, never goes amid the scenes of debauch or to places of sinful revelry. "The evil is not in the chariots but in their drivers. The spirit does not wish to destroy the chariot, but to get hold of the reins."

The nature within says "Go," and going, it incurs its share of the curse involved in the sinful act. It is this idea that Paul exhorts when he says: "Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." The soul sinning,

and making the body its agent and instrument, both together are involved in the condemnation. Hence Christ forewarns men: "Fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."

We cannot be too careful of our tools. The workman is foolish who needlessly destroys or misuses them. We need all our physical resources, all the powers of our bodies to do work rightly in this world. Many men turn in their automobiles every year for a new one that they may have the full power of the machine for its best work. This cannot be done with the body. As a man who cannot have a new machine, cares for the old one as the apple of his eye, so it should be with the human body which is our machine for all human life.

Christ came to repair the temple, the body. To be sure he taught the superior value of the soul, and warned men against the danger of placing more honour on the body than the soul. But he spoke well of the body.

There is a right value to the body. It consists in regarding it as the instrument of the mind, a temple of the soul. "Consider the uses of the body. It is God's schoolmaster teaching what the mind has in it for industry, thrift, and promoting all the basal moralities. In the interests of the body man cut down the trees and built them into shelters so it might have protection. For the body goes forth to sow, and the harvester reaps into barns and mills. For protecting the body man takes the wool from the sheep. For the developing of the body, the city builds its fields of recreation, the doctor brings his medicines and the tailor his clothes. For the glory of the body all kinds

of adornments are made that it may be made attractive. For the supreme glory of the body, Christ will bring forth from the grave, a resurrected body like His own."

We have read, in the last four or five years, of men in this country who have been giving money to repair some of the great temples in Europe, devastated partially by war. The work has been so well done, that the people of these cities marvel and rejoice.

There is a divine repairing. This takes in the body as well as the soul, although one is not as important as the other.

Before the Master can repair our temple, we must do three things; first, believe on Christ; second, repent of our sins; third, accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour. Then we are ready to have him dwell in the mansion that really belongs to him.

The electrician cannot charge your body with electricity while a single thread connects you with the ground, breaking the completeness of your insulation. The Lord Jesus cannot fully save you while there is one point of controversy between you and Him. Let Him have that one last thing, and the repairing will come that you need.

Once upon a time the thorny wild rose came into the garden and stood and watched the exquisite Marechal Neil in its beauty and fragrance. The wild rose said to itself with a sigh, "Ah! that is what I would like to be." Then, there came an inspiration, for it saw that with careful pruning from the gardener, and patient cultivation, it could be changed and bring to itself the glory of the other. And so it said: "Oh! gardener, I cannot, of myself, make my life what it

should be, but come and help me, for I give myself to thee.'' And then the gardener came and lo! after a while, the wild rose became beautiful and fragrant.

Thinking through this, do we not see that the Great Gardener, Jesus Christ, can graft our bodies and by a new infusion of His power, loose us from our infirmities as He did many years ago!

We should dedicate this temple to God, its builder and sanctifier. Our human body must ever be regarded as a sacred temple. If we rightly uncover in the house of God, because we recognize that it is the place where God meets His people, how much more should we revere the human body, which God declares is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

God comes down in a mysterious way, and dwells with us in our temple of flesh. How clean we should keep it! How sacred we should regard it! Nothing should enter which could defile it.

This body-temple is our home. Just as we regard our house and seek to keep it a place of purity and sweetness and goodness, so we should guard our bodies and keep them clean and pure.

There are times when some unkindly accident may have befouled our bodies until we have felt like hating and being repugnant to ourselves. But we can quickly restore our bodies to a state of normal cleanness. So it should be with their relationship to the moral precepts of God.

God, in Christ Jesus, cannot abide in a dirty house. The Spirit of God is a very particular housekeeper. He will not live in a house inhabited by vermin of sin and self-indulgence. When He comes in, He inoculates

and disinfects with the formaldehyde of spiritual power, and scrubs and cleans with the lysol of spiritual consecration, until the habitation of His holy presence, shines with the whiteness of His righteousness.

Perhaps the crowning reason why we should dedicate and value the body, is that Christ taught, that this "mortal shall put on immortality; that this corrupt body should become incorruptible; and that this earthly body should become a heavenly body."

We are told that when Roland was released from his captivity in the enemy's country, and provided with a guide, light, food and drink for his long journey, he was not sure what kind of a welcome he would find when he reached his far-off home and land, for perchance, some one had dispossessed him while he was away.

But for the pilgrim of God, Christ proclaims He is the door, standing open to receive him. In the days of the World War, many a soldier boy journeyed away across the sea and, after many months of absence, returned and came to his home. When he arrived, there was a glad, tumultuous welcome and a leaping to arms.

For the prodigal, out in the desert of evil living, Christ is the way for return and forgiveness. For the publican and the sinner, Christ is the door for pity and pardon. For those who are stricken down by their passions, and rise up to flee, Christ is the door of refuge. And, when at length, the soul passes down into the darkness of death, Christ is the door into immortal life.

And to the body caught in the thicket, Christ is the physician. Lost in the mire of weakness, seeking the path to health, Christ becomes the way. Smitten with

the fierce heat of passion, Christ is the fountain for all uncleanness and thirst. In health and prosperity, He is companion and friend. In old age and adversity, He is a staff and support. At last, at the end of the way, He stands opening the door into heaven, home and happiness. "He shall change the body of our humiliation, and fashion it like unto His glorious body." When He comes, the redemption of the body will take place.

The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed against a background of sin. In itself, the Gospel is a message of love and grace, but the condition it meets is one of guilt and danger. The love displayed in the Gospel is the love of a Father who seeks His erring children. The forgiveness of the Gospel is the forgiveness of a Father who receives graciously His erring children. The salvation, which the Gospel brings near, is salvation from sin and death, which is the penalty of sin. Man is sinful and the battle has hit him hard, but he can come back, he can recover, he can be saved. May God turn our battles of the flesh into victories of the Spirit!

IV

THE WORLD'S GREATEST GAME: THE GAME OF LIFE

"So run that ye may obtain."—I COR. 9:24

THE world's greatest game, has many answers. Baseball, football, golf, tennis, basketball, horse-racing, auto-racing, and a number of other games might be mentioned. There never has been a time when games of all kinds were so popular and attractive as to-day. More people play golf than any other game. It appeals to both young and old, male and female. The crowds take in baseball and football, as sightseers. Thrilling to see the final championship games of baseball in the fall. Mighty crowds all over the country look upon the "dummy score board" placed by enterprising newspapers who, in this instance, give the people what they want.

Most of these games are worthwhile for relaxation and amusement, if properly and economically executed. They bring health, a change of view and make friendships that help to oil the bearings of life.

But the world's greatest game, is that which takes us all in, and has its effect upon life as no other game. This is the game of life, and deals with the material and the spiritual, with the earthly and the heavenly life. Paul brings it to our minds, in his metaphor of the Christian runner.

The life of the Christian is portrayed by a number of allegories in the Bible, all of which have an interesting story of man's life. He is represented as a mariner crossing the sea of life, subject to storms and tempests that frequently cause the shipwreck of faith and the collapse of a good conscience. Again, he is a warrior, putting on the armour of God, fighting not against flesh and blood, but against "principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Here, in our text, he is a runner in a race, seeking a goal of victory.

The figure of a runner had a most profound suggestion to the Corinthians in the days of Paul. Every two years, the famous Isthmian festival was held in full view of the city. The people had seen the stadium with its seats crowded with eager and excited spectators. They knew the rigid requirements made of the runners, before they were allowed to enter the race. They had witnessed them straining every muscle, and running with patience the race, each one striving to be the first to reach the goal. They had cheered the victor as the crown of laurel was placed upon his head. All these points Paul seizes, that he may enforce the lessons of the Christian life, and encourage men to put forth an effort to win an incorruptible crown.

With this picture as a background we ask, What are some of the lessons that modern and ancient games reveal to us in our "Game of Life."

WE ARE ALL IN LIFE'S TRAINING SQUAD MAKING SOME SORT OF PREPARATION FOR LIFE'S RACE. The referee has blown his whistle or the umpire has called, "Game," and we are at it. There is no escape for us, now that

we are here. We are in the struggle now. But our living, our thinking, our doing will determine whether we sit on the bench or whether we are out as real contestants in the game.

At the opening of the Isthmian festival, each athlete who desired to enter as a candidate for the crown, was called into the arena. The crier, having commanded silence, laid his hand upon the head of each in succession and demanded of all the assembly, "Is there anyone here who can accuse this man of being a slave or guilty of any moral wrongs of life?" If any stain was found, he was excluded, but if his character was clear, he was led to the Altar of Jupiter, there to make a solemn oath that he would conform to all the regulations of the race.

In the game of life, all are in the race, and we are all called before the Starter and told, "so run that ye may obtain." All have the eligibility, but to run well and obtain, we must vow to abstain fleshly lusts, worldly entanglements, and the partaking of "immoral sweets," and weakening dainties. This fits in with the command, "to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and to run with patience the race that is set before us."

We are in a great stadium with many competitors and spectators about us. We must toe the mark and press onward to the goal. The field represents an opportunity, a chance to win. In fact, if we go with God and obey His rules, no one can miss winning.

As the dream of Jacquard appeared in a loom, and the vision of Christopher Wren in a cathedral, so our dreams, our visions, our ideals of training will bring us to the goal of possessions.

For our training, all apparatus for our needs is here. Does a man desire to be a farmer? Then he has the soil, the seed, as well as the plow and the harvester. Does he choose to paint? He has the colours and the ingredients for his paints. Does he desire to be a doctor? Then he has the human body, the scalpel and experiences to help him. Does man desire to give himself to mining? Then he has the pick, the shovel, and the powder to help him, as well as the mechanical devices of the machinist. Does he desire to be a business man? There is open to him a great and endless variety of occupations that are demanded by the public for its sustenance and pleasure. Does he choose to be an aviator? There is open to him an aeroplane and a variety of instruments to assist and direct him. Does man desire to be a lawyer? Then there is open to him, the laws and decisions of the court, setting precedents that shall guide him. Does man desire to be a minister? He has before him the Word to inspire, the Spirit to guide, and human lives that need help to conquer and live justly and purely before the world. All the apparatus needed by any living soul to make the Game of Life a success can be found upon the field of the world's stadium to help man to succeed.

The coach has a lesson, which is this: "Wisely directed, long continued, unremitting training is essential to success." A raw recruit will block every play, and often spoil the work of the whole team. The modern games of life are too rapid and complex for the ignorant and uneducated, however strong and zealous such persons may be. Many a prize fighter has lost his crown because he gave up training after a victory, and the

next contest found him depleted. The statement was made in the American Press that many of the men from America who participated in Olympic games at Amsterdam, in 1928, who had broken the records in the preliminary races at Harvard, lost out in the World competition because of unwise training on the way over to the greater contest. The daily grind is keeping us fit for all opportunities that may come.

The spiritual ideal is given to us when we read, "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. So fight I . . . I keep my body under and bring it into subjection."

No man can win the spiritual prize by watching the Church, through paying for admission in contributions, or just attendance, memorizing the ritual, singing the hymns, but by getting into the real game of loyalty and fellowship with God's people. Real training begins when we join the church team, and seek to make it worthy of its Founder, Jesus Christ.

We must remember that the game of life, wherever and however played, is, always and essentially, a contest and its stadium is a battlefield. Every path to any desired goal is always blocked by determined opponents, and every yard of advance must be fought and won. "Milksops and mollycoddles who are afraid of the scrimmage and want an easy job are of no use to any team or to God." The real glory of the game is not measured by the gate receipts or the relative scores, but in the joy of the contest, the overcoming of obstacles, and the fair winning of a hard fought battle.

Ibsen, in one of his memorable plays, *The Master Builder,* represents a man as oppressed by a strange

fear. He hears the young knocking at the door, and he fears that the young will enter in and dispossess him. Our fear is not of this kind, but it comes from the fact that we know there are enemies of soul and body that contest every upward path in our life. In a good game, the opponent must play almost as well as we, but not quite, and he must win some games.

Science tells us that every seed and root, every bird and beast has its enemies. There is no insect so small as to escape danger, no behemoth so large as to avoid battle. For every creature that walks or swims or flies, life is a struggle and existence finds opponents. Each new morning re-opens the contest, each evening some enemy goes down. Great is the company of destroyers. Gardeners war against the army of the aphides. Husbandmen oppose the blight and rust falling upon the ripening wheat. In the orchard an army of insects rises up against the apple tree. Enemies also go forth against man's house, man's ships, man's arts, man's life. The rust consumes his tools, the moth his goods, the thieves his gold. Storms sink man's ships, floods devastate his fields, fire consumes his buildings, wars destroy his homes and his cities. How numerous are man's opponents! The mist rising from the swamp is a chariot in which disease rides forth. Death even builds up an ambush in a drop of water. Oft the evening zephyrs that cool man's cheek, bear also the seeds of dissolution. Pestilence is not content to walk in darkness. Destruction walks even at noonday. Man hath sought many secrets, discovered remedies, invented tools and comforts; but no man hath yet been able to build a wall so thick as to hold his

enemies at bay, or a tower so high that no shaft can rise above his strong defense. And in view of all the dangers that threaten the happiness and peace of men and women, this word has gone forth to every human being—"Watch, watch, lest ye enter into temptation."

Every one has an opponent to his success. Uriah Heep, Mr. Hyde, Shylock, are out there. Jealousy, injustice, envy, are alert to contest the game for nearly all of us. It will have to be a good fight, if we win. All these but draw out the best in us, and give us alertness, originality, and keenness of mind to make the goal. We must keep alert if we win. A mistake in move and plan will give the other fellow a chance to seize on our mistakes and get himself over to the goal.

Once there was a great game of football between a college and a university. The teams were about evenly matched. It was predicted that the university would win, because of her greater weight. The game was opened with straight football and the university sent men in to batter the line of the college men. After a while, overhead passing became a feature of the game, and two clever pieces of strategy brought the university the only touchdowns of the game. A clever piece of passing of the ball to a player easily out of danger of a tackle from the college players brought the first down. It was evident that some one on the college side had overlooked some work that belonged to his territory. The player whose business it was to watch the movement that contributed to the loss of the team in ground gaining or blocking, was removed from the game. Another man was given the place and he went out and cared for that part of the team work.

How like this is to life for all of us! The other fellow gets his chance when we play the game stupidly or do less than our best. Sometimes, we are afraid of the scrimmage, and will not get into it right. Sometimes our best is not good enough, and we have to step aside for another.

There is something better than this in the game of life. If we fight our best, we cannot be defeated. Absolutely this is true if we listen to our Leader's advice. "LISTEN TO THE COACH," before and while in the game. Before we go in He gives His advice and while in He sends some one in to whisper to us some secret that will get us over our fight with our opponents. The man who will not listen to the coach in college is thrown out of the struggle and he is in disgrace with the men of the team.

Oh, if we would only listen to our Coach, Jesus Christ! In a certain penal institution there used to be a man who had lost his sanity; but one thing was his, and he felt it. So up and down his cell he marched, crying, "If I only had! If I only had!"

This will be the lament of multitudes some day, who would not hear the Coach of the game of life. He knows every movement of the game, and what the enemy will undertake to do. Nothing is concealed from His eye or wisdom. As worker after worker breaks through to us, in the providences of life, we should heed and obey this marvellous Manager who has never lost a game when His own obey Him.

Each contestant must keep the rules. To every player to-day is given a book of rules, or else the "rules" are read to him. Many a man is run out of the stadium

because of breaking the rules. The failures in college and other contests from this are tremendous. Some find these rules irksome, restricting them in dieting, sleeping, where they shall go, but the rules stand and men find themselves out of the contest and the chance of taking honours gone. The chief difference in men in many of these contests is in the observance of the rules. Men who have looked into the matters of contest, have written their wisdom into rules.

How speaks the Bible about our playing the rules of the game of life? "IF a man strive for the mastery, yet he is not crowned except he strive lawfully." We cannot keep to the laws of our own making or the ways of our own choosing. Everything is laid down for us in the codes of the Word by Him who has called us to this race in life. He sees all, understands all, knows what is best for our training and doing, and therefore in wisdom and love, He maps out the way we should choose in many of the matters of life, if we would win the goal.

At the same time, He realizes that we have originality and ability and therefore He says, "Come let us reason together." God allows for freedom and the use of new talents from age to age, but it is well for us to bring these to His judgment in prayer and conversation about the board of communion with Him.

However, the man who refuses to be guided by the "Rules of the Game" as indicated by God will find himself in greater difficulty than the man who refuses to obey the laws of eating, drinking and sleeping in the natural world. Laws are rules, and laws go straight to their mark, and when man gets in the way of them,

they seize him and punish him. The man who gets commendation of His Manager must obey the rules of the contest. These are found in the Word of God.

In this game of life, he who would win over others must, first of all, conquer himself. Any man who cannot refrain from the evils of life, is too soft and weak for "life's gridiron and will never reach life's goal." Self-control is one of the great prerequisites of successful living.

"Unless one believes in himself enough to master himself, why should he ask anyone else to believe in him, especially the manager of the team. It has been discovered to-day that the citadel of personality has many levels, and, that below the threshold of consciousness, are both the noblest instincts and the wild beasts of untamed desire. Down in the sunless caverns of the self are resources practically inexhaustible, instincts which will master us unless we master them, and the real zoological garden is not the one we see in the public park, but the one we carry inside."

The man who is going to win, is the man who says, "I am the captain of my soul." "He keeps his body fit, his mind alert and open to worthy guests. He keeps the 'chambers of imagery' within his conscious mind clean and wholesome."

The game of life demands that there be no attempts to play it alone. It is team-work that wins the best results. How quickly there comes to us the passage of a great runner and winner in a world race, "Many members . . . but one body. The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor the head to the feet, I have no need of you."

The desire to "star" is human, and has its place in some things, but it is not the best goal of life. A sacrifice play is often better and sometimes imperative if the team wins. All Star Teams, so called have often failed before the lesser teams because the latter played together and promoted team work. Jealousy, envy, ambition and disloyalty have defeated both men and teams. Such ideals, lower the team morale, ruin its efficiency and make success impossible.

The Christian man cannot Star himself. To do so is to lose. "Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." Sacrifice is the way of success in the game of life.

In this game play fair. Give to every man the chance that you would like to have him give you, if the circumstances were reversed. Be big enough to see the good and the worth of others and commend them where you can. Many games to-day are played unfairly, and the referee sometimes rules a player out of the game. This is a loss to the man himself and often to his team. Better not win than to be unfair. A victory with unfair methods is a defeat in the memory of the unfair contestant. It has a judgment of condemnation in the eyes of the spectators.

Never try to rattle the other man or team. It is poor business and a breach of good manners. Keep your game clean, at whatever cost.

How this spirit and justice would help the old world! How quickly men are stripped when the other man has the upper hand. The world is cruel in its game of business and pleasures. How we go by the motor car

that is in distress, saying, "It is none of my business," and rush on. The part of the Good Samaritan has been sometimes forgotten. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me." "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

In the game of life we must know how to lose and how to win. Paul said, "I know how to be abased and how to abound." How difficult it is for some to lose, and how they resort to alibis and excuses, instead of seeing how they failed! The greatest fun in a contest of skill is to win. The man who enters a contest with no desire to win—with no heart in it—should not go in, has no business to be in. He should be a spectator out in the stadium, and then he would be a poor specimen of a man. It is always the fellows who are in the game to win who *do* win, and, if they lose, they determine to learn from their mistakes and play a better game next time. "It is not the number of falls that a man has that determines his career but how he gets up from his falls." Ofttimes a man has to lose in order to know how to win; how to master the weaknesses of his play.

Know, at times, the odds seem to be against you. "But he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Some people quit when they see the contest is going against them. They give up before the whistle blows or the goal is reached. But, "the winner never quits and the quitter never wins." The big thrill comes when a seeming defeat is turned to victory by gritty playing. An athlete does not realize how much punishment he can stand, how much endurance he has in him until he has given his best and calls for more to

reinforce his strength. To his surprise he gets it, if he has trained faithfully.

If the curtain of struggle could be rolled back, it would give an inspiring picture of thousands who have won, because of a good "second wind," coming to help them over.

In the Christian life one must "be faithful, if he is to sit with God on His throne." There must be vigour, earnestness and determination. "I press forward," is the way of success.

Many have lost out, so far, in the race of life. No use to cry: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong," for you have no power to respond. "Flee youthful lusts," is too late; they have you and hold you as in an iron vise. What shall I say to you? "Be strengthened; yield yourselves to God," is the Gospel admonition.

Be persistent in this game of life. When Lindbergh moved away from the field in New York, the people held their breath. The law of gravitation held him down. But he was always lifting up that plane with the might of his will. It rose higher and higher in spite of the pull of the earth. He was up and away, and on to glory that makes him one with Columbus in his undertaking.

And the earth has a pull on us. To lift up into the atmosphere of true living and doing requires stamina, courage and persistent endeavour. A great man in New York says: "I have been watching the careers of young men by the thousands in New York, for over thirty years, and I find that the chief difference between the successes and the failures of men lies in the single

element of staying power. Permanent success is oftener won by holding on than by sudden dash, however brilliant. The easily discouraged who are pushed back by a straw, are all the time dropping to the rear—to perish or to be carried along on the stretcher of charity."

Persistency made Bancroft work twenty-six years on his *History of the United States*; Noah Webster thirty-six years on a dictionary; Mirabeau forty years before he had a chance to show his last reserve, destined to shake a kingdom. It made Field an untiring man, spending years and a fortune laying a cable which bound two great continents together. It held a Titian seven years on *The Last Supper*, and Edison fighting defeats until they were turned into victories. The world wants men who can play the game and persevere on to victory.

In this game of life, all eyes are upon you—the eyes of your friends, your relatives, the bleacherites, the eyes of the world, as they watch through papers and dummy boards, the progress of the game. How much they expect of us! We represent the hopes of the college, past and present members and a great host of well-wishers and supporters. It ought to be an inspiration to do our best, and often helps to win the victory.

And in the real game of life, the eyes of God, of angels, of glorified spirits, are watching us. Are we not told that, we are "surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses"? The over-world ought to grip and impress us. But it does not. The physical transcends the spiritual, and the seen obscures the unseen. Realms

unreached by planes, telephones and trains are doubted. "Consciousness is esteemed but a function of the mind; and the nearness and existence of a personal God are lost in the rattle of machinery and cars. Already cities are estimated by population and not by purity; by money and not by culture; men for their means not for their morality."

"It needs some great voice like that of Wesley, or Brooks, or Storrs, or Moody, to call us to the upward look, that we may recognize that we are in the presence of the retinue of the most high God. If we were not so engrossed in our buying and selling, in our eating and dressing, in our business and pleasures, we might see and feel the influence of the host who fly and execute at God's command."

They are expecting us to make this race. Who? Loved ones and angels; Father and Master Jesus Christ. What an incentive this ought to be to us! As they behold our manner of race, do they smile with joy, or feel disappointed at our mode of running? This incentive for the better ought to get down into our souls, and make us earnest and clean in the running.

Remember the reward. In college it is a prized letter, a ball, a split in the prize money. In the world it is some honour, some kind of wealth, some social position; some moral approval of the country and church.

In the ancient games, the slaves ran for their lives, their freedom. Only one could win. How they ran! Every bit of life, energy, force and will were used to win. But only one could win. When it was over the herald blew his trumpet, the king ascended the throne and as each victor's name was announced he ascended

the throne and was presented by the king, with the prize picked for such a part of the game. When all the victors had received their rewards, they marched around the vast arena twice, amid the plaudits of the people.

But while one of each race was made happy, the rest felt the loss of victory. They had strained every nerve but had lost. Not so in the running of the Christian race. All win who run and continue steadfastly "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of the race." Here, there is a crown for every one who lives in the spirit of Sarah K. Bolton's ringing lines:

"I like the man who faces what he must
With step triumphant, and a heart of cheer;
Who fights the daily battle without fear;
Sees his hopes fail, yet keeps unfaltering trust
That God is God; that somehow, true and just,
His plans work out for mortals. Not a tear
Is shed when fortune, which the world holds dear
Falls from his grasp; better, with love a crust
Than living in dishonour; envies not,
Nor loses faith in man; but does his best,
Nor ever mumurs at his humbler lot,
But, with a smile and words of hope, gives zest
To every toiler. He alone is great
Who, by a life of honour, conquers fate."

V

THE WORLD'S GREATEST QUEST: HAPPINESS

"Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he."—PROV. 16:20

MAN has always been seeking something. There is something in him that urges him on. He is never satisfied with what he is and has, as possessions. This in part accounts for the progress of the race. It has been said, "Where there is no quest, there is no conquest—only an inquest."

There is the quest for the Holy Grail, where the Christian knight seeks the cup that Jesus used in the Last Supper. The quest is rewarded at last in tendering to the beggar a drink of water. The beggar proved to be the Lord, and the cup used, the Holy Grail.

There have been many quests in this world. There was the quest for perpetual youth by Juan Ponce de Leon; the quest for gold; the quest for truth, and the quest for peace.

The Bible tells us of God's quest for man. There is no place where man can hide from God. "Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." We are like that wanderer of old coming along the trail at the close of day, faint and lonely, who thought he had left his father's God behind him be-

cause he had left his father's tent, but discovered, as he lay down to rest that he was pursued. "Lo, God is here and I knew it not," was his astonished cry.

Some one is after the soul of man. Most of us are made aware of this in one way or another. Meister Eckhart says: "He who will escape Him, only runs to His bosom; for all corners are open to Him. Men would escape this quest because such high fellowship would make demands upon them as would be intolerable." But the World's Greatest Quest is after happiness. All would be happy. The baby reaches out for something which he thinks will make him happy. The boy is happy if he can make the team in his school or college. The girl is happy if she can get into the movie or become noted. The young man is happy if he can be sure that his girl loves him. The middle-aged man is happy if he is assured of a good income, and the middle-aged woman is happy if she can get into society. The sick are happy if they can be sure of health again. And so we might go on. Happiness is hard to define because it covers so many human desires. Webster says, "It is good luck; good fortune; prosperity." Then he says, "An agreeable condition of the mind rising from good fortune."

Happiness means different things to different people. Some of the happiest people are those of the insane asylum. They laugh at trifles, for a straw hat is a crown; a faded shawl is ermine, and bits of paper constitute money.

It is true, however, that the appetite for happiness is not universally satisfied. Few have been filled with complete happiness. To have much and yet be denied

something, dims the joy of living. Even God's children are not filled with happiness.

But in our quest for happiness, God comes in His Word and tells us that we have the right to be happy. And he says, the time will come when His children "will be satisfied." Just as man has the right to eat and sleep, so men have the right to be happy. Men have a right to eat and sleep because their physical natures demand sustenance and refreshment. So also, men have a right to happiness because their mental and spiritual natures desire it. The appetite for happiness is as normal as the appetite for food and sleep.

Even our fathers saw the truth of happiness, when they said in their Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS."

Happiness is a duty, because it helps and inspires man. It is just as easy to take the law of happiness as it is to take the law of worry. To take the law of happiness is to signify that we are working in harmony with the laws of God and our being. This attitude of happiness is a great benefit to others. Henry van Dyke says, "A cheerful comrade is better than a waterproof coat and a foot warmer. The best results in life come from the happy people."

"Experience shows that unhappiness invents no tool, doubt and fear win no battles, discontent writes no songs or poetry. As the gloom of his dungeon steals the color from the hero's cheeks; steals the light from his eyes and lends a pale and sickly hue to his face, so

depression takes the nerve out of man's arm, takes the edge from his intellect, and robs the heart of its hope and the life of its victory."

But happiness bubbles like a spring; sings like a bird, illuminates like the sun, flies like a Lindbergh, goes like light; pulls like an engine, and executes like a power-house.

Happiness begins in health. The slightest disturbance of nerve or brain involves more or less despondency. "Mental depression is the danger bell that nature rings when the brain is overwrought." Vigour of body means power to easily pull the load; pressure of good health gives tonic to the mind; good generation of nerve force gives light to the face, elasticity to the foot and happiness to the occupant. Happy the man whose machine is well oiled, has good reserves and is running smoothly. Health is one of the great assets of happiness. A man may jump for joy, he may spin around with delight, he may have revelry when his body is in healthy life. The body is as the harp to the player, the horse to the rider, the engine to the engineer, the auto to the driver—man cannot execute as he ought without them, and the better they are perfected, the happier he will be.

Happiness is found in one's chosen work. Work and happiness have been dissociated in the minds of the people. It is thought that the child of good fortune is the man that does not have to work. But God works and Christ works, and the happiest people work. Eden was a place of toil. In spotless innocence Adam was commanded to dress and keep the garden. Not man's malediction, but man's benediction, is labor. The lazy man

is a caricature of the Almighty. Behind the most prosaic life there is an angel form of happiness for those who look far enough. Many men and women have marched to a destroyed eternity through the gate of indolence. Idleness invites disease. It is contrary to the whole law of the natural world, which depends upon activity. Goethe saved his Faust by finding something useful for him to do. "Occupation is the armour of the soul." Idleness benumbs the conscience, rusts the intellect, eats out the life, ruins the soul. Loafers are apt to be infidels. The religion of Christ is not maligned by busy merchants and industrious mechanics, but in public lounging places, given up to profanity and vile discourse and devilishness. Very rarely is an idle man converted to God. Simon and Andrew were converted while fishing, and Matthew while collecting the taxes, and Lydia while selling purple, and the jailer while looking after his prisoners. David was tending his sheep, and Gideon was threshing on the floor and Amos was among the herdsmen. It has been well said, "That happiness is half in the soul and half in the circumstances without, just as wisdom is one half in the educated mind, and one half in the page of the book read."

"Happiness should be sought in the pursuit of wisdom and wealth. He who seeks to do God's will first; who puts duty before pleasure, cannot escape the glow of happiness. What ripeness is to the orange; what the sweet song is to the lark; what culture and refinement are to the intellect, that happiness is to man."

Wealth and honors do not always mean happiness to a man. What is a throne to a man if the throne of his soul is dark and desolate with sin? What was the pomp

and glory of Herod's court? What was the sound of revelry to him when there was no response in his soul to it all? What was the sumptuous feast when his heart sickened at the contemplation of his wicked marriage, and the shedding of the innocent blood of John the Baptist? "There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord."

When will we reflect that the physical accessions of happiness are negligible? Dancing, physical enjoyment, is taking the time, the energy, the strength, the best in man, and using them for the poorer, weaker things of life. Shall we seek happiness in gayety and dissipation; in light and poisonous literature; in amusements coarse and corrupting and enervating; in business enterprises, questionable and dishonest? No, not there. Shall we find it behind the high towers of the citadel of luxurious selfishness? No, not there.

All these physical accessions are of brief duration. Our pleasures, our glory does not consist of the table, the ball room, the card table, the movie, but in doing the will of our Father. Solomon possessed all temporal advantages, and he left his verdict, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Pascal wrote: "Happiness is the union of ourselves with God." Many rich people who have an over-plus of good things, find themselves unhappy. They have overlooked the necessity of the moral and spiritual elements in true happiness. Our unhappiness more often springs from some lack in the higher realm of the spiritual than from any failure of physical comfort. Many young people fancy that if they had plenty of money they would be able to buy all happiness. They would live in fine houses, have fine clothes, drive fine autos, and

go to all the amusements their hearts desired. We sometimes say: "Happy as a king!" But we also say: "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown!" Naaman was a great man, and he was wealthy, and he had high favour, but he was not happy, he was a leper. Lot was a wealthy man, but he was not fortunate. He lived among a very wicked people, in whose company it was impossible to find pleasure. And Jesus tells us of a rich man who was so rich, that he did not know where to put his goods, but He called him "a fool."

"Men wear out body and mind in their struggle for wealth and position, to find, often enough, how much duller they are than when they started." Napoleon at the height of his power was called "the unamusable." It was a saying of Bismarck that while he had known many a contented forester, he had never met a contented diplomat or minister of state. Old Creevey, speaking of a certain English nobleman and his wife, says: "They are rich much beyond their desire of expenditure; they have the most elevated rank of their country; I know nothing to disturb their happiness, and yet they are apparently the most miserable people I ever saw."

Happiness will not come either at the bidding of genius or high mental gifts. Think of the glooms of Byron and even of Tennyson! Carlyle had in many ways the first mind of his time, and—if, indeed we are to take his moanings seriously—his dog was, as a rule, a good deal the happier of the two.

David sang, "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord." We would change this a bit and say, "Happy that man whose resources and means and outgoes are of the Lord."

No man is truly happy who must depend on outside things for his happiness. There must be a development of one's inner faculties for happiness. John Ruskin says that his mother taught him to find happiness within himself and not in the things he possessed. Is not this the wisdom of Scripture when it says: "Within are the issues of life."

The secret of happiness then is an inwardness of habit and the poise of the soul. It can never be artificial. It must be a harmony between us and God. "George Romanes, the gifted scientist, who travelled into infidelity and then back to God again, found as the result of his experience that 'the nature of man without God is thoroughly miserable.'"

Happiness is a powerful incentive to conduct. People seek power, success, money and fame because they believe that in these lies the better happiness. Getting and having, owning things, has gained the ascendency over other routes of happiness, because to-day there are more things to be owned by the individual who has money than at any previous time. But there is no end to such getting and to lack what you want in these days is to be miserable.

Such a search and aim is unfortunate because all will find that things do not satisfy but heap on the misery in such possession. When one puts his trust in things outside of himself and these things begin to fail the world seems to collapse. The person who avoids being at the mercy of externals will cultivate good books, service, art, friendship, recreation and the church. A character so built is in a position to meet and overcome the vicissitudes of life.

Jesus said: "Happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Poverty of spirit then is nakedness of soul before God. He is happy who throws aside his own rags of righteousness and going to God says: "Clothe me, for I am naked; feed me, for I am hungry; guide me, for I am ignorant; put thine arms about me, for I am weak; give me thy truth, for I know not the way." "As often in our cities to-day, the man on the street or office holds up his hands before the bandit, so in the better sense, the soul in the presence of God, must throw up its hands and surrender to God. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' the consciously bankrupt in the presence of God. Does a prodigal soul wish for happiness? I know of no chance for him until he flings away his sin and standing in his naked need acknowledges his poverty of soul. The happiest moment in the prodigal's experience was when he buried his face on his father's shoulder and said, 'I have sinned.' The happiest man at the temple gate was he who smote his breast and without so much as lifting up his eyes, said, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' "

One of the great truths about this happiness is that it is not reserved for the few, or for a particular class of persons, but all may participate in it. You who are young should be lightsome of heart, because your innocence renders you dearer to God. You who are old should rejoice, because you are nearer to the palm of victory. You who are in a state of righteousness, should be gladsome because you are more conformable to the standard of Christ. You who are sinners should rejoice, because you are invited to pardon. You who are wealthy may rejoice, because, like Zaccheus, you make your

riches subservient to the comfort of others, as well as to your own gratification. You who are poor should be happy, because you imitate your Master, who, being rich, became poor for our sakes, that by His poverty we might be enriched.

Again Jesus says: "Happy are the pure in heart." Who of us are pure in heart? This means we must have singleness of purpose. The diamond must be of the "first water" if it is to flash the light. The double-minded man can never see the happiness of God, for his vision is broken and disturbed. When the sea is like a mirror, it reflects the sun, it sees the sun. When the music is pure it grips the ear and rejoices the heart. When the water is pure it refreshes the body; when otherwise, it destroys.

Christianity is truth set to happiness. Gloom and unhappiness go out of the human world when Christ and His life come in. Happiness is the sun always shining, but sometimes above the clouds. But it must be the "sun of righteousness."

Make the most of your happiness and the least of your sorrows. Use the telescope at the enlarging end for the the former and at the reducing end for the latter. In Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby,* we have Mantalini who believed that "we all were going to the demnition bow-wows." But in the same book we have the Cheeryble Brothers, who were always reservoirs of happiness and cheerfulness.

If the God, whom we trust, does not change, the trust itself should remain firm. If it was ever true that we are in the care of God and may look for His favour, it is true even more when we are in trouble. It is said that

two rabbis looked upon the ruins of Jerusalem. One mourned and the other rejoiced. "See the desolation of the city," one cried; "what is left to us?" "See the desolation of the Holy City," the other answered, "but God is left to us." In the desolation of the city is the pledge of restoration.

All these things teach us that there are no events, nor circumstances that are prohibitive of happiness. Virgil, Homer, Milton, Dante, Bunyan, Pope and Schiller each sang beautiful songs in the midst of physical sufferings—like a bird with a thorn in its breast. "Beethoven was deaf, but what sonatas broke out of his soul! Angelo who was a master of form, had a broken nose. Burke and Bacon and Hawthorne had sore bodily ailments; but, oh, what eloquence and what philosophy, what peace! Like the sun, when sometimes a river plunges into a gloomy chasm, catches up the flying mists and weaves them into arches of radiance, so a merry heart catches its light into life's gloomy vales and spans the heavens of a weeping soul with rainbows of hope and peace."

"The soul of man is big with the possibility of happiness. When men accept Jesus Christ, they will pass from the temperate zone of intermittent happiness, with its periods of depression and gloom and find the tropic realm of perpetual happiness." Unrest and unhappiness come when we turn away from our resources in God. Truth invigorates; it makes buoyant its possessors. It is never discordant. Fling open the windows of your mind and heart and let in the sweep of sunshine that warms the life, and you will get happiness.

You can will your happiness. There is a proverb which says, "Every one is happy who thinks he is." We

can order our thinking. You cannot regulate the weather by your will. The rain comes down without asking our leave. But our mental weather is in our hands. The grandest liberty we have is that of choosing our outlook. At this moment, there are hundreds of guests you might invite to your inner sanctum, guests well- or ill-favoured, guests clothed in black or in white; guests of night or of morn. You might invite within, or suffer to come in, all the fears and all the worries about you. "But if I were you, I would not suffer anything of the kind. Why not be master of your own house. Why such a beggarly assemblage when you can move in the best of society? Why not hope instead of fear, and trust instead of despair? You have not learned the art of living unless you have learned the art of willing. The disciplined soul thinks of possible evils just so much as is needed for practical action, and no more. It will not dwell under clouds when it knows its way to the clear sky."

Happiness is secured by life's true friendships. The widow of Schumann said, "Whenever I am to play in public any of my husband's music, I would read over and over again the dear love letters he had written me during his life." All true love is divine love, and is a token of the infinite heart of God. No man can be truly happy who does not truly love or is not truly loved. "The greatest of these is love." "The soul may sooner leave off to subsist than not to love; and like the vine, it withers and dies if it has nothing to embrace." Love is like wings to the bird, like sails to the ship, like health to the body, like culture to the mind, it helps on to happiness through friendship.

Friendship inspires, it is like rays of sunshine upon

the plant bringing growth and stronger life; it is the sun shining through the painted windows of a cathedral, colouring and embellishing it; it is like a lighted bulb under the globe, it brings out its beauty.

"I have a Friend!" Forget it not. No music is so sweet as His; no voice rings so helpful; no heart so true; no power but is His; this Friend has happiness in His heart and hand for us. You may lose health and wealth, place and power, you may be incapable of relishing earthly pleasures, but no man or force can wrest from you, against your will, the happiness of Christ in the heart.

Imagine, if you can, the world had no Christ. His name, His love, His friendship, His salvation gone. What a strange world it would be. We would not have Christ's picture of our Father, we would not have the story of His love, or of His forgiveness of sin. It would be an eclipse of the sun to the world. Happiness would lose its greatest originator. A newspaper prize contest for the best definition of a friend was won by this statement: "A friend is one who comes in when all the rest go out." Such a friend is Christ. Great is the song that we sometimes sing: "I am happy in Him."

Happiness is secured by living on the sunny side of the street. I read awhile ago of a man who had a fine home completely equipped, that looked northward, and moved just across the street to a house that faced south. The home he left was elegant in all its appointments, it was commodious, it was rich in associations. Asked why he moved into an inferior house, his only explanation was that he wished to live on the sunny side of the street, "All sufficient that explanation!" His front

rooms were always in the shadow. When snow was on the ground by his steps, the ground across the street was clear. When he walked down his sidewalk on January days, the dark shadow filled one half the street, while the other sidewalk was full of sunshine.

One may live in the shadows or in the light. If you live in the shadows you will become pessimistic, sour, disagreeable, gloomy and hopeless. Such people do not know that there are any stars in the sky; they only see the clouds, or the fog.

But one may live in the sunshine. Clouds may come but they have it bottled up within and letting it out, go on happy and cheerful, a blessing to all. "When they cross the threshold their shadow always falls behind them. They warm the hearts of their friends like a winter's fire. They exhale delight as naturally as an orange tree exhales perfume. When trouble settles down on them like the night they remember that it is the darkness that brings out the stars. They have a good word for everybody. Their friends are legion. They are happiness makers. They are joy producers. Their fun heals like a medicine."

Many people ought to move across the street, to the sunny side. We are in the gloom, and the shadow fills the living rooms of the soul. They can be filled with sunshine. Open the switch, throw up the curtains, flood all with God's light, and it will make happiness, within and without.

Happiness is secured by doing. Jesus said: "Happy are ye IF YE DO—" Beecher said: "The strength and happiness of a man consists in finding out the way in which God is going and in going that way, too."

Happiness, then does not come to those who seek the gratification of their lusts; it does not come from trying to climb up socially; it does not consist of fine clothes, big autos, travelling about; it is found more frequently in doing for others. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It makes more happiness to give than to get. When self is the centre there is no happiness. But when self is forgotten there is happiness at its height. When a man knows he has nerves he cannot be happy. The happy man is he who not knowing that he has nerves cares for the other man.

How utterly intolerable this world would be if every one lived for himself. The baby would never grow up, it would not have a chance to live. The culture of the mind would go and we would not know about the world in which we live. Man would never be redeemed, for Christ's salvation would not be here. Happily these things are not so and that "otherness," lies at the basis of all life worthwhile.

Giving is blessed, because it is like God. He has need of nothing but just to give. The glory of the Gospel is a happy God, who gave His Son. This is the law that Jesus revealed and declared. He gave His life "for a ransom." If a man shall seek chances to do for others, he shall find heaven all about him and the secret of happiness will be his.

When the old French nobility chose as their motto *Noblesse Oblige,* they simply accentuated, "he who would be chief among you, must be the servant of all." Any man who wears upon his breast *Ich Dien* (I serve) will soon have a place with God and men.

VI

THE WORLD'S GREATEST MEDICINE: LAUGHTER

"God hath made me to laugh."—GEN. 21:6

WHAT a lot of medicines the world of drugs has to offer! What wonderful potency they are advertised to possess! What a lot of money is being spent for their supposed healing power! And they do have a value in many ways, some of them. There are tonic medicines that help the vitality to come up, and awaken new energies and life in us. Then there are soothing medicines that help in time of burns and inflammation, and give rest at night. There are medicines that help the heart and prolong life. Such medicines add just enough re-enforcement so the balance shifts the right way.

But ofttimes there is a best and greatest medicine, and it must be had if possible to save life. "Only one thing can save him, and I must have it quick," says the physician. How glad we are if he gets it, and how happy when the loved one comes back to health once more.

What is the World's greatest medicine? Interesting the replies of the doctors, if we could get them. But some would say this and others would say that. There would not be perfect agreement among them. And

when I come to name my answer to this question, I shall raise a protest here and there among my readers, but I am going to name it right now, and get the suspense over with; it is this, LAUGHTER. We have the Bible on our side to start with, for it says, "A merry heart doeth good like medicine." Dr. Richard C. Cabot, of Harvard University, would agree to this when he says, "At least three-fourths of all illnesses cure themselves without anybody's finding out that they exist. The proof of this we find in the examination of the human body after death. One lists about two hundred and fifteen diseases known to medical science, and of these there are about eight or nine which we can cure by drugs. Surgery cures a few more. The rest cure themselves or are not cured."

He says, further, "It is commonplace that bodily health is affected by thought and by emotion. Take first the field of industry. When a man who is out of a job gets a job, or when one who has a job gets a "raise," it does not affect his mind alone. Anybody who looks carefully, can often see a demonstrable effect on his body."

Laughter is an emotion which also has an effect like medicine. Given a fair chance, the human system digests food, assimilates the digested products and rearranges the absorbed material, with a harmony in which the various organs and cells interplay. This harmony begins even at the sight of food, as seen in the watering of the mouth, which is but a preparatory stage in digestion. As a result of the sight, smell, taste and feel of food in the mouth, a message is sent to the

stomach, a flow of digestive processes are enabled to go on without delay. In a like way, just as soon as partially digested food begins to empty into the intestines, a chemical messenger is sent to all the glands taking part in the intestinal digestion and a steady flow of juice is ready for the oncoming food.

All these nicely balanced reactions of digestion go on best in HAPPY SURROUNDINGS. Surface effects of excitement are well known. Thus the contraction of blood vessels with resulting paleness of the face, the stopping of the flow of saliva, the rapid beating of the heart, the quickened respiration, the trembling and twitching of the lips, are bodily changes which all have seen in fear, worry, pain and excitement. The moral is that it is not best to eat under such conditions of life.

Upon the activity of the adrenals comes our health or our weakness. If adrenalin is injected into the blood it will cause the pupils of the eye to dilate, the blood-vessels to be tightened, the activities of the alimentary canal to be stopped, and sugar to be liberated by the liver.

How is adrenalin related to emotion? Investigators show that the secretion of adrenalin is increased in great emotion, that pain excites the glands to pour into the blood-stream an increased amount of adrenalin, and that fear and rage do the same thing.

The lesson we are drawing here is that good nature, laughter and cheerfulness give digestion and assimilation a fine boost, and allow the inner harmony of the human system to go on pleasantly and efficiently. Chemical states and emotions are linked together. Let

us maintain them at their best, for our good and the pleasure of our friends and for the greater joy of living as we should.

"Laughter is to make merry," and "A merry heart doeth good like medicine," links definition and text together. We like the happy people and they brighten up the ways of life. Some people are distributors of gloom and few want their goods. Other people bring good cheer and soothe and inspire life. They are the best medicine for store, shop, office, church or drawing-room.

Every morning the sun rises with radiating light, brightness and beauty, illuminating everything, everywhere it is allowed to come. The birds sing, the dewdrops glisten like diamonds, the trees awaken to the touch of joy, and the flowers throw out their fragrance.

And that is just what happens when the man who laughs with God in joy goes along through the world.

> "Hath thy heart sunshine? Shed it wide!
> The wearied world hath need of thee."

Laughter is more native to man than tears. O. W. Holmes said, "Mirth is God's medicine, everybody ought to bathe in it. Grim care, moroseness, anxiety—all the rust of life—ought to be scoured off by the oil of mirth." One writer says, "Children without hilarity will never amount to much. Trees without blossoms will never bear fruit."

Melancholy, solemnity, used to be regarded as a sign of spirituality, but it is now looked upon as the imprint of a morbid mind. "True religion is the joyous, rejoicing kind that can laugh and be happy." It is said that Lincoln kept a copy of the latest humorous work, and it

was his habit when fatigued, annoyed, or depressed, to take this book up and read it for relief.

Laughter is built into our nature. God put it there for a purpose, and it helps others and it helps us. Darwin tells us that monkeys smile and laugh when tickled or pleased. The dog wags his tail to show that he is pleased. The smile is a feeble and gentle form of laughter. It consists of movements in the eyes as well as in the mouth. I have heard people say, "He has a laughing eye," and we know that the eye often twinkles, and it indicates a pleased mind behind it.

What has been built into our nature has a purpose behind it. The voice communicates speech, music and sounds that reveal life. A good hearty laugh has a communication of goodwill and it indicates approachableness. We can often weigh people by their laughing or not laughing. The insolent man rarely laughs. Defective forms of living, like insolence, superciliousness and reticence, never help the cause of humanity. The man who laughs indicates sympathy and helpfulness.

A man of science says that he finds that the effect of chloroform upon plants makes a stimulant that causes the buds and blossoms to come forth even in winter. Men who live with smiles and laugh with sincerity, will stimulate not only their own lives but the lives of others. It is through all the forms of life inspired of God that "the man of God is furnished unto every good work." One of our alliances for good in this world is laughter.

Laughter is a vent, a place for relief of tension. Dr. Borden P. Bowne, Professor of Philosophy, Boston University, came before his class one day with a very black eye. The students began to stare and to wonder,

when the genial teacher said, "Last night, I was groping in the darkness, when, suddenly, I saw a great light." The tension of the moment was quickly relieved in the room, and hearty laughter, in which all joined, gave relief and information.

A few years ago, at one of our National Councils, there was a bitter debate as to whether the various papers and magazines should be combined or still be kept separate. All day the debate waxed warm, and somewhat provoking. Finally, a delegate got the floor, and said: "A few years ago a gentleman of New York City owned quite an estate on Long Island. His custom was to run down every Saturday night, and remain over Sunday. Coming in one night he was met by his superintendent, an Irishman, and driven out to the farm. After a few moments the owner said, 'Patrick what have you been doing this week?' And he replied, 'I have been putting dressing all about the place, and it has been a big job, sir.' The other replied, 'Pat, the time is coming, when I can come down here, bring all the dressing you need, in a condensed package so small that it can be put into my vest pocket; do you not believe it?' 'Begorra I do sir,' said Pat, 'and when that time comes, you can take all the condensed crops, back to New York, in your *other* vest pocket.' "

A great laugh arose, the tension was taken from the audience, and it can be said, that the condensation did not take place.

It is said that Lycurgus set up the god of laughter in the Spartan eating-halls, because he thought there was no sauce like laughter at meals. As the tube is made to let off the vent of a boiler when too high, so God has

ordained that laughter shall relieve many of the hard spots in life.

Laughter eases the mind, develops the lungs and helps the circulation of the blood. We are told that "air-vessels, ordinarily in disuse, become truly vital as the result of a hearty laugh. When the lungs are properly developed, the nutrition of the body is much improved. When one concentrates he does not laugh. While a state of tension exists, laughter does not arise. When a man's mind is under a great strain, a movie comedy is a great relief to his mind, and he gets eased for awhile."

Pilgrim went singing clear from the City of Destruction, to the gates of the Celestial City. He sang as he dragged himself out of the Slough of Despond, as he climbed the Hill of Difficulty, after his fight with Apollyon, past the Giant's Cave, in the Pleasant Meadows, by the River of Life, when he escaped from Doubting Castle, as he journeyed through the Delectable Gardens, and so on to the end. Nor did his singing end there, nor shall ours.

Laughter or no laughter reveals, to a large degree, the character of the Christian. If there is but little heat around the bulb of the thermometer, the mercury marks a low degree. If there is but small faith, there will not be much gladness. If there is but little Christianity in us, there will be but little laughter. If we have hearts full of light, there will be a manifestation of that light in gladness and song and laughter.

Robert Louis Stevenson wrote a great truth when he said, "To be happy is the first step to being pious." And laughter is closely related to happiness. The Orientals used to say, "By dint of laughing the roses

are opened." Make much of joy. God does. Nature does. Christians must, for Christianity does. "Let laughter be the wine you drink" (drink that wine only).

Whoso drinks of true laughter, helps himself to power and usefulness in a world of sighing, trouble and burden bearing. Laughter eases these things in one's life.

In Ralph Connor's, *The Doctor*, there is the character of a depraved gambler who is converted; his life is transformed. He hungers to reach others of his class, and finally one of the worst of his former companions comes to seek from him the better way. The converted gambler is poor at explanation; he cannot tell the how, but he knows the fact. And so he simply puts a New Testament into the hands of his friend and tells him he can bank on that book. The rough mountaineer read the story and teaching of Christ, and one day the story got hold of him and he pressed the book reverently to his lips and said, "I'm agoin' to follow that trail."

God has many trails across life's pathway, and one of them is the joy of Christian laughter, which radiates and quickens men into a trial of such a life and example. When he takes it, it gives back joy, health and a working program that helps others.

There is a sardonic laughter. There is in laughter both the spiritual and the sensuous. What Ulysses found hard to resist was not the anger of the sea, but the witchery of the sirens. Not all laughter is noble; a good deal of it comes from the unclean story, the ribald jest, and the exaltation of the winner over his foe in the hour of victory.

In *The Odyssey* we have Odysseus coming home and unrecognized, fighting the beggar Irus. "He struck him

on the neck beneath the ear, crushing in the bones, and immediately the red blood gushed up through his mouth, and he fell mourning in the dust. But the proud wooers threw up their hands and laughed as though they would die."

Laughter has followed the story of the unclean and ribald suggestion. Because this is so, laughter is a revelation and a prophecy. It is a revelation of our heart and a prophecy of what life is going to be. The laughter that has a sting for some one else, that is unkind, unjust or unclean, is not for me.

Whatever creates mere passing merriment for the unwholesome of life, is like the crackling of thorns under a pot—very bright and genial for the brief space it lasts, but too speedily followed with the ashes into which it so very soon resolves itself.

Laughter has spent too much of its time and power in connecting itself with the impure, the unholy and sacrilegious side of life. When a man starts out to tell a story and says in the beginning: "This is a fine story but a little shady," he is the mouthpiece of the evil one and a helper and a carrier of the leprous in life. "He who would grow beautiful roses in the gardens of others must have them in his heart and speech."

Dr. Hillis, in *Comfortas,* tells us that he had an officer with the biting tongue. His brother-officers avoided his tent, as children avoided the kennel of an ill-tempered dog. One day, when the king and his servants were dining in the tent, a messenger came, saying the horse of the officer of the biting tongue had stumbled, and that the officer had been thrown and killed. In that hour, each soldier looked significantly in the eyes of his fel-

low; a smile passed over all faces; each officer shook hands with the soldier at his right or left.

A great deal of laughter comes from noting the mistakes of others. This indicates in the eyes of some, a jealousy in our nature, and its quick joy over the discomfiture of others. Freud goes so far as to say that every person unconsciously hates every other person as well as loves them. Therefore we laugh when we see a person slipping on a banana-peel and falling down. Plato in his *Philebus* maintains that the pleasure of the ludicrous springs from the sight of another's misfortune.

We must be careful here. Students and teachers often laugh at the mistakes of one of their number in recitation. This often affects the offender so he cannot do himself justice in his recitation. Fear of ridicule or laughter keeps many a person back from his best development.

But good laughter that means cheerfulness, joy, happiness, and sympathy, is a great tonic and help in this old world. We really laugh only when we are happy. The winds and the waters and the blossoms of earth may be said to laugh—they seem to breathe joyfulness, to whisper of peace and beauty. Music laughs in rhythm. All harmonious vibration represents Nature's soulful laughter.

There is a play called *Lazarus Laughed,* which has had a lot of attention given to it. The play opens with a scene in the little town of Bethany, at the home of Lazarus. Christ has passed on and out of the home and the family and the curious are awaiting the first word from Lazarus the risen one, that they may discover what he has seen and heard in the Great Beyond.

Suddenly the silence is broken. "There is no death," Lazarus proclaims. "There is only God's eternal laughter, and life, happiness and peace." The play portrays the contagion of joy and laughter, as that of fear and hate. As the God-given laughter comes from the lips of Lazarus it moulds that of the multitude and they laugh with him and life becomes to them all a thing of joy and beauty. But when he is gone from the scene the moods change.

Later on, the scene shifts to Rome, where is seen the contagion of fear, hate, jealousy and revenge. Here Lazarus meets Caligula, Tiberius and other famous and infamous Romans. The lives of these men are filled with fears and misgivings. They not only fear death but they fear every one including themselves. Naturally they are envious and revengeful of those who, like Lazarus are filled with God's great love and laughter and are thereby happy and carefree.

Time and again the author shows the incompatibility of hate and happiness and of fear and love. Hence Rome cannot contain Lazarus and his kind and at the same time the Roman type. Consequently Cæsar's wife poisons the wife of Lazarus, and Tiberius himself condemns the laughing Lazarus to be burned in the arena, for fear there is no death, as Lazarus contends. He is afraid he may be dethroned by the preaching of the laughter of Lazarus.

Of course this is a mythical play, but it has a good lesson of the joy of the Christian who knows and accepts his God. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!"

A Liverpool merchant, who employed a large num-

ber of men, showed a friend a large photograph with eighty men in it. He said to his friend: "I am going to put you to a test. Now, there are a certain number of men in that picture who are fine Christians. Pick them out for me." His friend said: "Well, that is the most remarkable challenge I ever had in my life, but I will have a try." He said: "I looked for the happiest faces I could see—faces with something like the print of God's peace upon them. I picked out eight or nine, and he said, "Yes, you have found them." Their faces told the story of their happiness.

We should do things in a happy frame of mind, then they would be well done. They have a slogan in the telephone business, "THE VOICE WITH A SMILE WINS." It would be a good thing for us all to adopt such a slogan in all ways of life.

Bruce Barton says: "When Carnegie's young men were making his fortune, and their own, he received a letter from a solemn stockholder. 'Your Mr. Schwab does not have a proper sense of the dignity of his position,' the letter said. 'When he meets with his directors, their laughter can be heard all over the office. This is not a good example to set before the organization.' Carnegie mailed the letter to Schwab, and sent with it the framed picture of a monk, holding his fat sides, and laughing until the tears ran down his face. 'Hang this picture in the director's room,' he directed. 'Have every director take a good look at it before each meeting. Let it be a constant reminder that *good business is never done except in a happy frame of mind.*' "

We have heard of "Allopathy, Homeopathy, Neu-

ropathy," in the world of medicine. But a new word has come to the front; it is "MERRIOPATHY." This means the science of the healing laugh. In many cases it has a better effect than any other "pathy" for curing disease. Some ills need mental help, others medicinal help, and yet others the surgeon's help. But the "Merry-help" is the Bible help, given to us in our text.

Laughter relieves tension and is a safety valve often. All nervous energy must find an outlet. The sense of humour is given man largely for the purpose of causing a sudden increase of nervous activity such as to compel, through laughter, a complete let down of that nervous tension.

There is "a laugh of derision," spoken of in drama, poetry and prose. The Bible has it when it says, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: The Lord shall have them in derision." I am glad that this passage indicates "derision" at the attempts of men to set themselves against His laws, and His people. It is not against goodness, sincerity, honesty and integrity. It is not against the man who finds the joy of living in a world where he sees God and His truth and love. It is only against the man who rejects God's grace, care and salvation, which He has offered to man, but which has been rejected, despised, by some of His children.

I do not forget that there is a time when one feels no laughter in his heart. A motion-picture corporation suggested January as the national laugh month. I am glad they did not make it a year. Thirty-eight times the Bible speaks of laughter, yet, oftener, it speaks of thoughtfulness and quietness. The man weighed down by the woes of the world; seeing its sin and misery,

will often weep and sigh, as Jesus did, at such things. But there were times when He mingled with the merry-makers and did say: "Be of good cheer."

One of the best ways to help the world of to-day is through good cheer. Sometimes it is easier to find fault than to cheer, but one helps the world, while the other discourages mankind. The great need for mankind is to realize that it cannot succeed as a brake on the wheels, as an arrester of life, but as inspirer of new hopes, an energizer of new aspirations, and a "cheer-op-o-dist," that will enable one to conquer under all circumstances.

We will make merry in the Lord's grace and truth; we will remain sensitive to the world's woe and sin, and be solemnized with our responsibility to God and mankind. In this well-balanced relationship, we will find the world's greatest medicine, and God's way of revealing it.

VII

THE WORLD'S GREATEST BUILDER: FAITH

"Building up yourselves on your most holy faith."—JUDE 1 : 20

THE question as to what is the world's greatest builder, brings many answers. It is conceded that we have thought of a number of things that might fit in as an answer. But after thinking all these over, I feel that I am warranted in saying that faith wins the contest.

Love might seem to be the greatest builder. But love works because faith is behind it. One cannot love without faith. It is easily accepted that faith is a higher faculty than reason. Reason builds laboriously and often fruitlessly its towers of Babel, but faith quickly soars into the bosom of the Infinite.

Scripture seems to indicate that faith is the greatest builder. "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith." "By grace are ye saved through faith, it is the gift of God," is our warrant.

Henry van Dyke says: "Where you find a flower, you know there must have been a seed. Where you find a river, you know there must have been a spring. Where you see a flame you know there must have been a fire. When you find a man beloved and blessed of God, you know there must be faith. Whether it is re-

corded or not; whether you see it or not, it must be there, germ of his virtue, fountain-head of his goodness, living source of warmth and light; for without faith it is impossible to please God."

We might turn this about and say: "Without faith it is impossible to help God." Why do I say this? Because if a man is without faith he will not try, and nothing is more displeasing to God than for men not to try. "Is it not true that if a man has not faith he will not try? If a man does not believe there is gold in the mountain, he will not try to crack the rocks and dig the earth. If a man does not believe that things can be made better, he will not try to make them better. If one does not believe his life can be brightened and broadened, he will not get out into the sunshine or the open. If one has no faith in goodness he will not try to be good, and if one has no faith in truth, he will not be truthful." If one believes he cannot be healed of bodily ailments, he will make no attempt to get help.

Here is another natural law in the spiritual world. And this law throws the responsibility on us. Faith and results; faith and power. The one measured by the other. This is where Jesus challenges us. You men who know the law; you men who are using the law elsewhere, use it here: "According to your faith be it unto you."

Such a challenge disarranges many of our theories, cuts across some of our judgments and makes void many of our complaints. It shifts the responsibility from God, from circumstances, from luck, to ourselves, and causes everything to hang upon the use we make of faith.

Faith as our helper makes power. It makes men strong, ardent, persistent, heroic. "If I have the secret of power, whose fault is it if I am powerless? I can no longer plead another stepped into the troubled pool before me. If I have the means of savingly relating myself to God, whose fault is it if I wander hopeless in a world without God? If I hold in my hand a key to the riddle of life, whose fault is it if I am overwhelmed by its mystery? If I possess energy that can remove mountains of evil and rectify human relations, and bring righteousness to the throne, whose fault is it if the mountains stand firm, and human relations remain unadjusted, and unrighteousness holds the sceptre? If as ministers we have the ability to receive the Holy Spirit and make our work effective, whose fault is it, if we lack the power and ability to save the people? If as Church members, God is hovering over us and about ready to give and save the people, through us as co-workers, whose fault is it, if we will not take this power?"

These are not extravagant statements. We are considering faith that makes power. The secret and source of all true greatness, of all heroic achievement, of all great, helpful service, is the power of faith. The men and women who have faced and fought gigantic wrongs, who have tunnelled the Alps of difficulty, and brought great reforms to pass, have been inspired and sustained by a powerful faith. "It was faith that hung the lanterns on the prow of the ships of Columbus, and lighted a path over the waves that at last gave him the new world. It was faith that stood at the helm of the Mayflower and piloted the Pilgrims across the Atlantic to establish on this side a republic of freedom and right-

eousness. It was faith that led John Wesley to abandon the life of a scholar, and as an evangelist awaken England from the slumbers of unbelief to a recognition of holiness of life." It was faith that led Lindbergh to jump into his aeroplane and push out over the Atlantic for Paris that he might pioneer the way of travel in the air from continent to continent.

"What then is to be said, if we fail to use the one compelling call that summons us to new fields to conquer, and that refuses Infinite energies that can come to our aid? Does not this truth, put the responsibility upon us?" According to your faith be it unto you. "Faith can build if we will give it a chance."

The difference between ministers, teachers, and workers of the church, is faith. Where faith is, it is an active principle which cannot be held in leash.

Faith *is!* No man can deny that. No man is without it; no man can be without it. Every man is exercising it at every turn. We show faith when we are ill by going to a doctor for advice and treatment. We do not always know what he prescribes or why he may operate, but we generally follow his directions. We carry his prescription to the druggist and because we have faith in him, we take the mixture which he hands to us. We deposit our money in the bank because we have faith in the officers of the bank, and we believe they will invest our money wisely and well. We show faith in the cars, the elevators, the meals we eat and the stores where we go and trade. We are exercising faith every day!

Jesus nowhere defines faith or tells what it is. He takes it for granted. He appeals to it as a power exist-

ing in man, which he knows about, can understand for his daily pursuits, and which he is using all the time.

When one comes to this understanding of faith, it is a great builder for force and power in our lives. Those who grasp this idea, lay hold of something which is able to make men mightier than themselves. Your faith determines your standing and decides your achievements. Well might the disciples pray, "Lord increase our faith." Increase of faith means force to do and be in this world.

There is a real antagonism between the life of faith and a worldly life. The worldly life never looks up. It has no high, divine ideals, no spiritual aspirations. An old Puritan expressed the antagonism between these two by reversing the terms of the statements: "This is the victory that overcometh our faith, even this world."

The challenge of the spiritual world is: Use the faith that you have and you will get spiritual help and power. There are some things which do not need to be proved; they have been established by experience. When you leap from a window you do not have to cultivate the belief that gravitation will draw you to the earth. You know some of the ways in which gravitation works, and you are using it every day. Yet, all you can say about it is, gravitation is the power that pulls things toward the centre of the earth. When you plant the seed in the ground, you know that the attraction of the sun, will pull the plant up. You do not have to know how the sun is made up or what gases may be there. All you can say about faith is, it is the power that pulls men up.

Jesus does not appeal to men who must get faith, but

as men who must use the faith they have. He does not say to them: "You must be persuaded that faith is possible, then you will have faith, then you must exercise it." His language is most simple: "Do you believe?" Then, "according to your faith be it unto you." He appeals to them as men already possessing faith, knowing its realizing, compelling power. USE YOUR FAITH! Test the law! When we approach the spiritual realm it is not more faith that we need, or a different faith, but to use the faith we have.

The men of faith win. Whether it be Abraham going out, not knowing whither, or Moses contending with Pharaoh, or Paul proclaiming a new gospel, or Morse laying an Atlantic cable, or Lincoln guiding a nation in the crisis of its history, or Wilson rescuing the World's Democracy, or Cullis helping God to heal the sick, or Billy Sunday saving the lost to Christ. Every man who is opening up new fields and enterprises or doing something unusual, is a new proof to us that men do believe, and that they receive according to their faith.

Not to have faith is to fail. How sad the story of men who lost their faith in God. Shelley was the child of great genius. But he became wild, sinful and a pleasure seeker. When he was nineteen he entered a hotel and stepping up to the register, with a mocking laugh, wrote "Percy Bysshe Shelley, atheist and radical." It was not long before his faith in men was gone, as well as in God. He doubted his friends, deserted his wife and alienated his benefactors. He fell like some high tower to the ground below, and left his life as a ruined mass to his country and friends.

Goethe, lost his faith by brilliancy of intellect and

sinful alliances. He died crying, "More light! more light!" "Like one who has injured his optic nerve, who cries for the coming of the morning, not knowing that noontime lies o'er all the land." And how is it in our world to-day? Injure the ear and the world of music ceases to exist. Mutilate the eye, and the sun itself falls from the sky. As well expect a savage with his blanket to appreciate the frescoes of Angelo, or a South Sea Islander to admire the poems of Shakespeare, or Tennyson, as expect the bad man to believe in a God who is good.

Faith is necessary for man to make contact with God. You can do nothing for the man who mistrusts you, who does not believe in you. The barrier of mistrust stands as a wall between you. What good can a physician do the man who disbelieves in him? What kind of a home is it where man and wife disbelieve in each other?

Faith is necessary for a man to make contact with a railroad trip across the country. A few years ago, I bought a ticket in Atlanta, Ga., for my daughter-in-law. The ticket carried with it passage from Hood River, Oregon, to Miami, Florida. Pullman berths were reserved for her at starting point and Chicago. Tickets with transfer by bus, also were given her, from one station in Chicago to another. With faith she stepped on the train, and had no fear or doubt about all being well for her trip across the country. The railroad people carried out their contract in every instance, and no trouble came to pass anywhere.

Faith is necessary for the life to come. "I have taken my reservation; have *you*?" "It is appointed unto man once to die." If you have not made your reservation

you are foolish. Why not do it in faith, right now. You can make contact with faith, that will give you peace and quiet of mind. If the most substantial victory of life is won, it will have to be a faith victory. Contact with God's word and prayer and quiet communion, will give you confidence that "God will keep that which is committed unto Him against that day."

"By faith we understand." "It is a principle of comprehension, something which clarifies and enlarges our vision. The scientist thinks some of God's thoughts after Him. The geologist reads God's handwriting on the rocks. The chemist finds out how God does some things, through the combination of acid and alkali. A Christian evolutionist will tell you that evolution is simply the story of how God makes little things large, immature things ripe, simple things to be complex and highly developed." But faith tells us that God is the Agent and Author and Worker of all things. The intellect gives us the minority but faith gives us the majority.

"I have swept the heavens with my telescope and have not found God," said Lalande. This need not surprise us, for God has never promised to reveal Himself to users of telescopes and microscopes, as such, but only to those who are pure in heart. "Eye hath not seen, nor ears heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for those who love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." "I know Christ," said Robert Browning, "by the direct glance of the soul's seeing, as the eye sees light."

"We have a sight faculty, the eye. By this faculty

we come to the knowledge of things around us. We learn their form, their colour. We have a sound faculty, the ear. By this we come in contact with the knowledge of noises, harmonies and sounds. We have a touch faculty, and by this we come to hardness, softness, roughness or smoothness of physical objects. Now just as physical things are known by physical faculties, so spiritual things are known by spiritual faculties. As the faculty of sight assures me that there is a physical world, so the faculty of faith assures me that there is a spiritual world.

"I contend that it is just as reasonable to trust the knowledge we receive through our spiritual faculties as to trust the knowledge we receive through our physical ones. You put your hand to a hot plate of iron and experience pain. That is a real experience. You trust that knowledge and act on it in the future. A wounded conscience gives me pain as truly as a wounded muscle. As I trust the faculty of sight when it assures me of a physical world, so I trust the faculty of faith when it assures me of a spiritual world. I believe the one as truly as I believe the other. Christ is as real to me as any man I have ever met on the street or read of in history."

Faith builds. "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith." This is the only kind of building that gives permanency and men of might. Look at Babylon! She piled up her power among the nations of the earth. She had great riches and power, but she fell, and only her ruins tell of her former glory. She raised no son capable of singing her praises; she raised no statesman capable of leading her out of her distresses. She sub-

stituted power for principle, gold for integrity, grossness for virtue, the transitory for the intransitory, unbelief for faith. Her life was a dream which vanished away; it was a nightmare with a terrible ending. She had a tragedy with no Shakespeare to write it. Her life was a poem without a Tasso to compose it. Her life was a history without any Heroditus to give it expression.

How different it was with Greece! She had her Socrates, her Plato, her Phidias. She deposited some of her riches in men and she endured. So it has been with America. Massachusetts had her Webster, South Carolina her John C. Calhoun, Virginia her Patrick Henry, Illinois her Lincoln, Ohio her McKinley, New York her Theodore Roosevelt, Pennsylvania her William Penn, and the great West, her Marcus Whitman. Our country lives through her men of faith.

Faith saves. There is no ill of the soul or body for which faith is not a specific. We are saved from sin, not by evolution or by revolution, or by works alone, but by faith. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Bishop McCabe had a brother, who, after forty years of thraldom to strong drink, was finally, through the faith, love and perseverance of the Bishop, redeemed from the sad slavery. The Bishop used to say: "When I get to heaven I am going to take my brother by the hand and lead him up to my mother and say: 'Mother, here's George; I have brought him home.'" And nothing will save a vast multitude of men unless their fellows, in love and faith, help them to fight their battles through to victory.

A Christian man can estimate himself by the amount

of faith he possesses. What a strange idea this is! This is not the way men estimate themselves. They use other standards. Men rank themselves by their money, by their intellect, by their business sagacity, by their influence, by their cleverness, by their positions, by their social standings. Whoever heard of a man estimating himself by his faith? But Paul speaks about "a measure of faith." No wonder men think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, when they measure themselves by their money, or by their talents or by their intellectual prowess and attainments. It is not until men begin to measure themselves by their faith that they become humble. They discover then how poor they are, and taking their place by the side of the publican they pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner." A man does not think of himself sanely until he estimates himself by his faith.

Our faith measures can be seen from another angle. The presence of faith made the heart of Jesus happy, and its absence caused his heart to lament. Paul makes much of faith; it is on every page of his writings with rare exceptions. Over a hundred times in his thirteen letters he pens the word "faith." Paul knew that faith could make men strong and efficient and send them forth to dare and to die. He knew that men live by faith, work by faith, endure by faith, get by faith, and die by faith. He knew it was true what Jesus said: "Only believe! According to your faith be it unto you."

Think of the loss of influence that comes to a man's will and life, when he lacks faith in God and the truth! No man can be defeated who believes that an infinite

God is working with him. No enterprise is too vast for his achievement, if God works with him. This sense of God's presence and care turns feeblings into giants and makes timid men brave. Peter was weak and vacillating, and the faith of God made him dare a mob of thousands. Paul had a sensitive body and shrank from pain, but the faith of God made him endure stonings in the street, mobbings in the city, enemies in the wilderness, until he achieved his death. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" has been the cry of the apostles in their persecution, the reformers in their cells, the patriots in prison; why cannot it be our cry to-day. "Take out of history the brave men who have written our laws, and won our liberties, and kept Christianity alive, by seeing Him who is invisible, and it would be like taking the corn from the granary, the trees from the forest, the reserves from the banks, the warmth from the summer, the sun from the sky, and the brain from the body. Alone, man is a mere creature of fate and circumstance, bowing before wind and tempest of temptation, bruised like a reed before trouble. But once man believes that he is in God's hands and that he can be used of Him, he becomes invincible, heroic, strong as an oak, true as steel, unyielding as iron."

Faith is a motive power. If a man is possessed by it something can be done. If the minister of a church has faith he will move his people. He is the pivot of power to his church. If he is cold, and indifferent to the saving of souls and making his church aggressive for missions and the kingdom of God it will not be alive to these great things of Christ. Faith in a pastor's

heart is more necessary than knowledge in his head, if he is to be a successful man in his pulpit. "Audiences will take logic, but they want it on fire; they will listen to reason, but they want it permeated with feeling. The preachers that take are the preachers of heart."

The men of faith behind us who did things for God and made their ministry a success are demanding the same devotion as the sacrificial soldiery of France:

> "To you, from failing hands, we throw
> The torch—be yours to hold it high!
> If ye break faith with us who die,
> We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
> In Flanders fields."

A man is never at his best until he has faith. He may have good learning; he may have oratory, and he may be a good mixer. Christ's investment in him is dead until he has faith. Faith connects him up with the power house; with the Spirit. It enforces belief in the Word; it encourages movement and arms for service. Faith brings the maximum and not the minimum of life. Pompey, on entering Jerusalem determined to explore the recesses of the temple. Irreverently he lifted the veil of the temple and entered the holy of holies, and found—nothing. His eyes were holden, for there dwelt the invisible God. Ministers' eyes are holden, unless they have faith. "No attribute of God is locked up." The windows of love, hope, faith and power are opened to the holy man of God who seeks Him, humbly, sincerely. Our best equipment for our work is faith. Faith in the Spirit of God. It will set the wheels going, and bring forth fruits of righteous-

ness. Oh, for the builder of faith to be at it for us to-day! He would reconstruct and beautify all, if we give Him His chance with us. "Only believe!" "According to your faith be it unto you."

"I feel," wrote Keats as he set out for a long walk over the hills of Scotland, "I feel as if I were going to a tournament." We are facing the tournament of life, and we must have an undaunted heart, and a mighty will, and an audacious faith, if we are to win in this struggle. A trust in God, a hope in truth, and a knowledge that our Master will be there, will give us the goal of victory.

Cleanthes, of old, used a wise prayer:

> "Lead me, O God, and Thou, O Fate,
> Thine appointment I await.
> Only lead me. I will go
> With no flagging steps, nor slow;
> Or if I degenerate be,
> And consent reluctantly,
> Still, God, I do follow Thee."

VIII

THE WORLD'S GREATEST INSPIRER: HOPE

"The God of hope."—ROM. 15:13

NO man is defeated as long as he has hope. It is the inspirer of his life. "Faith and hope are twin sisters. Hope expects; faith inspects. Hope looks upward, faith looks at-ward. Hope has expectation, faith has possession. Hope idealizes, faith realizes. Faith sees, hope foresees." Love stimulates but hope inspires to make the attempt.

"Hope is that faculty of the soul by which it believes in the existence of what it thinks OUGHT to be and expects what it considers to be desirable. Hope springs out of the soul just as the water springs out of the fountain, or light out of a candle, or a flower out of a seed. It is not the result of experience; it is not dependent upon proof. It possesses the power of spontaneous origination. It is self-animated. It can be developed but it cannot be created. Children do not have to be taught to hope, any more than they have to be taught to drink water, eat or breathe."

Rob people of hope, and the best of life goes. Man can exist on a little hope, but they cannot go on without it. When the time comes that a man says, "I have no

further hope," we expect tragedy in his life. When you hope you go forward, when you despair you go backward.

God is not feeding His children on false hopes. The fact that hope has been from the beginning of man and comes down through history, is a thing to build upon. God gives "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Many pictures and similies have been given about hope and they are helpful and stimulating as well as inspiring. The Bible has much to say about hope. Back of all our troubles, all our sorrows, all our sins, is God—and He is "the God of hope."

When England and France were bled white in the World War, the entering of the United States was hope to them. I like Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe,* because the Black Knight always came as hope and victory to the needy one in the story. Truth is stranger than fiction, and the Bible gives us our Knight in God. "HE IS OUR HOPE, AND WE ARE SAVED BY HOPE." How can we prove this? Turn to the statement: "Thinketh no evil, believeth all things; hopeth all things." What does this mean? It means that God thinks no evil of us, believes all things of us and hopes all things of us. After years of disappointment, sufficient to make God despair of us, He still believes in us, hopes in us, and still thinks no evil of us.

"Others may doubt us but God never will. We may abandon hope, but He will still hope on. We may be overwhelmed with the consciousness of our failures and shortcomings; but He sees nothing in us but good.

What a contrast? Our mistrustfulness of Him, and His boundless confidence in us."

"What a revelation of ourselves is reflected in such a love as this! What a truth to keep before our eyes as the lodestar of existence. For God's view of things must needs be the true view. If He thinks no evil of us, it is because we have the potentiality of rising above evil. If He believes all things of us, it is because we are not unworthy of His confidence. If He hopes all things of us, it is because He sees what we may become in His love and grace.

"If this be objected to by some, the answer is, He knows us better than we know ourselves. We only know the material side; the reality that is within us we have yet to learn. We see our weaknesses, our incapacities, but He knows our potentialities."

Here is the ideal as over against the real. Here is the potentiality as over against the actuality. Here is our hope, in what God can see in us, if we but go with Him.

Most people have thought of God as a great detective, an avenger, seeking out those who have broken His laws. In *Les Miserables*, Hugo shows us the French detective, thin-lipped, grey-eyed, heartless as a wolf, sly as a fox, persistent as a weasel, always following Messieur Madelaine until, at last, he grasps his man and brings him to justice.

Some have thought of God as Shakespeare's Shylock, exacting the last pound of flesh. So true have been these delineations and thoughts of God, that many have thought that the best thing that could happen to God would be for Him to die.

Go through our literature and you will find many illustrations of the mercilessness of God. Make a mistake and the mistake is hung around your soul forever. It has been said:

> "The moving finger writes, and having writ
> Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit
> Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
> Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

The world has said: "The act is done, and all the power of all the universe cannot change the record by a single jot." Despair or rebellion comes out of such thoughts concerning God.

Is it any wonder that a woman said: "I do not expect much from God." And her eyes flashed and her voice was hard, as she said it.

But all the time the great Bible was within our reach with its God of hope, crying out that we can expect everything from God that we need, if we will let Him give unto us. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." "Turn ye! Turn ye! why will ye die?" "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Some one said, "I could face it all, if I was only sure of God." I can tell you that He is a God of hope; a God that is "long suffering, of great compassion, and of tender mercy." You can be sure of Him.

Look back into the Bible and see how God, is the God of hope. Some people there have failed so strongly that the inward peace is gone; joy has lost its vital content; conscience feels outraged and memory becomes a

place of torture. Can the bird of broken wing ever fly as high again, or the harp of broken string be restrung? Can a man ever have a second inning who has been struck out in the first? The Old Testament shows that power is given to the faint; men slipping are delivered; men sinning are recovered.

Look at Adam. In spite of the fact that he disobeyed God and sinned, God came back, calling "Where art thou Adam?" He did not strike him dead. He was a God of hope to Adam. God brought Noah through the flood only to see him get drunk and yet He saved him. Abraham told a lie, but God did not strike him dead, and later he was called "the father of the faithful." Moses was a murderer, and he had many ups and down, but God translated him. David sinned a black sin, but later God redeemed him, and he was called "a man after God's own heart."

In the New Testament we have the same God of hope revealed. Peter said: "I don't know him," but later was made the preacher of Pentecost. Saul of Tarsus stood by as they stoned Stephen, but later he became an "Apostle," and the writer of the majority of the books of the New Testament. To those who forsook him, he later says: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

Sinai may gleam with retributive fire, but the Gospel gleams with hope. "In Adam all die," cries Genesis, but "In Christ shall all be made alive," says hope.

If a man sins there is hope telling him to turn to God and be saved. One of the great passages in the Bible is this: "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." If a man is lost, it is not because God made it to be so; it is be-

cause man refuses God's offer of pardon and salvation. God says: "It is not my pleasure that the wicked perish but that he return from his wickedness and live."

Christianity charges a man with hope; the hope that he can come back; that he can recover; that he can be remade. San Francisco recovered and so can man. David was remade and so you can be, if you will let God do His work.

The Old Testament is full of the recovery of man. Jonah was a discredited man, but the word of God came to Jonah a second time. This shows that God was putting hope into him and giving him another chance. Moses had broken the tables of the Law in his anger, but God said; "Take two other tables, like unto those thou brakest, and I will write upon them again." Yes, God gives every man the hope of coming back again. Take your chance in the Lord Jesus Christ, and hope says: "You shall be saved."

What has hope done for the world? It has been the great encourager to every enterprise under the sun. The farmer plants his seed with the promise of a harvest. The teacher gives instruction to the boy with the hope of his being better equipped for successful living. The business man fills up his store with the hope of selling to the coming customers.

Hope is one of the world's great inspirers. The children stand before the billboards hoping that some day they may be a great performer or an actress. The young man hears the orator and is inspired to believe that he too will be able to speak before men. The young woman hears the singer and is quickened to try her powers and make something of her voice. The worker in

the factory hopes that he may be able to own a factory and produce goods.

Charles Lindbergh starts out on his trip to Paris from New York, inspired with the belief that he can do it with his plane, "The Spirit of St. Louis," and behold fame comes to him!

Hope is the great saviour of life. Man knows he is down to-day, but he hopes to come back to-morrow. Sickness lays one low but hope saves a man's spirit that is able to bring him back again. Hope builds around him the atmosphere of success and gives the staying quality that carries him on to win.

Hope sees beyond the cloud, the obstacle, the hardship, the weakness, the failure and the difficulty. It says: "Never accept the verdict of your defeat, your melancholy, your sickness, but the inspiration of your hope." "Keep going," it cries, "and you will reach the desired goal."

The Psalmist says, "Thou hast made me to hope." God is not mocking us, but pushing us on to get the reward. Hopes are ours because they are prophecies of what we can be. You can be sure of God. Why not be sure of yourself in Him?

Be sure and have your hope in God and not in circumstances, for they may be against you. But if your hope is in God, He controls the circumstances and can make all things work together for your good. Here is an important distinction. Get God and you have hope and events must work out your good.

If a man has weakness of flesh, there is hope for him. "If through the Spirit a man can reckon himself dead unto sin and alive unto God, just as surely he

can reckon himself dead unto disease and alive unto health." There is no more reason for a man being sick, than being a sinner, for the fountain opened up in the house of David is for all sin and uncleanness. What we are to believe is, that the well of water within is springing up for our healing as truly as for our salvation.

Hope says that the same indwelling power of God that purges from all sin, overcomes all diseases. "Who forgiveth ALL our sins and HEALETH ALL our diseases." Christ was surrounded by a circle of people who had been healed. The Gospels were written to convince men and women who were in sin, that they might be forgiven and come back to God, through Jesus Christ. And in choosing their material to convince men, they gave more space to the ministry of healing than any other department of Jesus's work.

Hope says that there are within the Christian, resources that are not human. God dwells within by His Spirit. It is not impossible for toxins to be made by Him which can cure human needs. Science shows that this is being done by the body itself. It cannot be too much of a stretch of hope to believe that God with His exhaustless store is equal to the bodily wants of His child. "Call upon me, and I will answer," is a ringing challenge of hope and faith to us all.

We have exactly the same reason for expecting to be healed that we have for expecting to be saved. We have His word for it. Our trouble to-day is that there is more fear of sickness than hope in health. As long as that fear remains, it is sure to produce a limited condition. Whatever is within must objectify without.

"There is a law of unfoldment in man which says that he can advance only by going from where he is to the place where he would like to be."

Hope says, grace not sin; health not sickness; plenty not poverty; faith not fear; trust not doubt; love not hate; spirit not matter; victory not defeat.

If a man is in trouble, hope is there pointing out the way of help and deliverance. A man can build a house to keep out of cold, but he cannot keep out trouble. A man can store up money to take care of himself in his old age, but he cannot prevent trouble, even if he has money. A man can buy an auto but he cannot keep away from trouble as he rides in it.

It is to be noted that our own troubles seem greatest. There is no trouble like our trouble. Gladstone said: "I am leading a dog's life." Dr. Rush said to young doctors: "You will want two pockets, one for your fee and a bigger one for your troubles."

Many of our troubles can be traced to ourselves. "O Israel thou has destroyed thyself," is applicable to individuals. And yet, some troubles come to good people, like Paul and Peter and disciples of Jesus to-day.

But hope comes and through the teaching of the Word, says: "God abandons no man to his fate, the prison doors will swing open," and let Peter out. The friendless have a friend; the poor have a helper; the sick have a healer; the sorrowing have a comforter.

Hope shows us what happened to Milton, Bunyan, John the beloved, Paul the afflicted; they gave great masterpieces to the world as a result of their troubles.

In Spencer's *Faerie Queen*, there is a magnificent description of Despair. The Knight is in the dungeon,

a prisoner and no hope has he. But give him a charger, and let him have but a start, and he forgets his hopelessness.

Let hope come to the man who is in his hard place of difficulty, and he will fight his way out and up to victory. This is what hope is for. Do not let go of God's key to the unlocking and recuperating power that is given to you in hope.

How does God reveal this hope? Thomas Cole has painted life as a voyage, guarded at every turn by an angel. There is an angel hovering over the baby in his crib. There is an angel watching over the sturdy youth as he guides his bark on the journey of life. An angel helps to guide the strong man as he tries to place his bark amid the waves and winds of the sea. There is an angel whispering to the aged saint as he peers into the beyond—that angel is hope.

But greater yet the revelation of God's hope as it comes through Jesus Christ. The Bible says: "The hope of the Gentiles is in Jesus Christ." In *Ben Hur,* the hope of the two old leprous women was in the Christ on his way to Jerusalem. To their cry of hope: "Thou Son of David have mercy upon us," came the quick response: "According to thy faith be it unto thee," and they were cleansed and Ben Hur found his mother and sister in the joy of the fruition of their hope in the Lord Christ.

It is a sad thing to say, and yet must be said, that sometimes hopes are baseless and illusory. In one of the scenes in *Don Quixote* a knight puts upon himself a helmet made of pasteboard. That helmet being smitten and pierced by a sword, he sews it up again, and would

not part with it, but in his insanity wore it, and felt that he had an all-sufficient helmet on his head.

Are there not many Don Quixotes among men, who put on hope that looks very well till some sword of trouble or trial is thrust into it, but which is then found to be like the pasteboard helmet that went to pieces the moment it was touched. A hope that holds a man when he does not need holding, but breaks when he does, is like an anchor that does not hold when the ship would save itself in the time of storm.

Too many men and women put their hope in the material things of the world. Sometimes it is friendship which is betrayed and hope goes down in a baseness that is indescribable. How often woman is caught in this kind of a hope. Many, when the hope illusion is discovered go out and destroy their lives. Others put their trust and hope in riches, only to discover that a day comes in which all these are swept away.

But no one need fail who puts his hope in God. Some have taken the fever of passion from their parents; they have felt the passion of appetite and lust. Others have inoculated themselves with the virus of sin. The Christian hope says to you all: You need not despair; you can be saved from that which is now working for your destruction. Stop your wrongdoing right where you are and God will save you. What shall you do? Look up. Have you ever seen a cloud that the sun did not finally penetrate; did not finally scatter? The sun is king over all clouds, and at the shining of his beams the shadows disperse and the gloom flies away. And so God, through the brightness of His mercy, has mastery over all sin, and no cloud of guilt over man's

head has been able to keep his soul in the shadow, when he has lifted his face to God in the hope of His word.

Is there any man without hope? Paul speaks about "Having no hope." And again the Scriptures say, "the godless man is without hope." What a condition? We are familiar with hopelessness in common life. We know the rout that begins in the sick chamber when hope goes out of the room. So long as the patient remains hopeful the doctor has a mighty helpmeet in his ministry. We know the despair that settles down upon a man buried in a cave down in Kentucky when a stone falls upon him, and a cave-in prevents the rescuers reaching him. Hope goes and he dies amidst the prayers and heroic efforts of a great nation.

Now what comes to a man when hopelessness invades the common every-day life is also experienced in the life of the spirit in the realm of religion. The Bible employs a very powerful picture to express the state of those in whose life there is no hope. "They that sit in darkness," is the scene presented. It is a very graphic picture. You sit by the open fire-place and after awhile the fire dies out and the warmth gives place to a searching chill. Then the light goes out entirely and darkness is added to the coldness; there are people whose lives are just like that; "having no hope."

What brings this hopelessness? One of the things is tyranny of sin. Sin puts out the light of joy. The man who sins after a little, feels the disquiet and unrest and there comes a sense of a great and hungry uncertainty.

Another thing that brings this hopelessness is the tempest of sorrow. A little while ago we read of a

ship which has passed through great seas, that the waters had got down into the engine room and put out the fires of the boilers. Is not this what the Psalmist meant when he said: "All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me!"

Christ kindles hope. In this same scripture, Eph. 2:12-13, we have these words after, "HAVING NO HOPE" . . . "BUT NOW IN CHRIST JESUS—" And the Psalmist says: "Thou hast made me to hope." WHY THROW AWAY SUCH A HOPE, when you need it, and must have it?

You with the fires of spirituality out, a poor bit of driftage out upon life's sea, you can be renewed. You know what men can do in this world! They take the refuse place in the city and turn it into a place of beauty; they take the old house, and renew it again and make it habitable and comfortable. Jesus says the same miracle can be wrought in the moral world. He can come to the godless man and make him over. "The wilderness shall become a garden, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

"Look up, not down." God calls us to look up, never down. Looking upward changes the current of one's life. The direction of our gaze causes us to note a correspondence between where we look and what we demonstrate.

The doctor can do very little good for the sick one who looks down. "If the patient's thought and vision are upon disease and despair, then he travels an adverse road. A person travels in the direction he faces."

If disease or sin is upon us, we can get help to free ourselves from it by taking hope, by looking up, by turning to Christ in prayer.

When the British were besieged at Lucknow, and the weary days wore on without relief, till worn and half-starved the garrison was in despair, all unexpectedly a Scotch girl rushed from one to another crying: "They are coming, they are coming. Dinna ye hear the bagpipes?" It was too good to be true—but hark! There is the throb of the music, and soon the cheer of the gallant Highlanders. The besieged were wild with joy. The hope of deliverance had come.

That is a faint picture of what God wants us to see and hear. We need not despair, God is coming through His Spirit and if we will believe, we shall be freed.

There is the hope of life beyond. This comes from the life that now is. "The fact that the gift of God is eternal life rests upon the evidences of the eternal in the life that God has given to us. It is the fact that we are now the children of God that leads us to believe that it is not yet made manifest what we shall be, and that enforces the hope that there are larger and richer experiences awaiting us." The Word gives us this statement: "The hope which is laid . . . in heaven."

Jesus says: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you." There is a place for hope of future things because Christ shivered the last lance of materialism and called all generations to the high hope of a home in the Father's house. Jesus and His apostles had no doubt about this question. They said: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

One writer has said: "There are two philosophies,

two religions, on earth which invite the allegiance of men, Hope and Hopelessness. As for myself, I am sure that we are not dust but spirit; sure that the universe is not aimless but purposeful; sure that God does not make us to kill us; sure that Christ is not dead but risen; sure that dust to dust was not spoken of the soul." "The Divine Parent who will not allow an electron or a throb of energy to be wasted will not cast His own children as rubbish to the void."

What is the use of hope? If it should be realized, it is related to living. John gives us the answer when he says: "Everyone that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he [Christ] is pure."

We have here the one great obligation which guides the Christian life. The man who hopes to see Christ and be like him, will be mastered and inspired by this hope. Anything that does not belong to the "Christ-man," should go. Fear, worry, hate, sin and kindred worldly relationships should go. The Christian's hope will set him out in his words, acts, and life.

"Purifieth himself even as he is pure," is a hard task. Duty sometimes becomes a yoke; to get rid of sin costs much and makes a man bleed. But this work must be done if we are to be like him and see him as he is. It demands self-denial but in losing our lives we find them. This is the way to victory.

In 1867, when Faraday lay dying, some one whispered in his ear: "What are your speculations?" "Speculations," he answered feebly, "I have none. I am resting on certainty. I know whom I have believed."

IX

THE WORLD'S GREATEST THING: LOVE

"I have loved you."—JOHN 13:34

WHAT is the world's greatest thing? There are a number of answers, and yet a vote among the people would return a majority vote for love. Some believe that money is the greatest thing in this world. They say: "Money talks." So it does, and it has much to say about the on-goings of this old world. Money achieves many things. It buys pleasure, it gives ability to travel, it produces a home, clothes, jewels, autos, good times and many friends. It can even buy a wife or a husband. It has a great purchasing power in this world of ours.

Another says the world's greatest thing, is mind. Well that is better. A mind trained with intellectual power, is mighty. If you should tie a cord to every factory, store, office, any place of business and follow it back to its beginning it would lead to the mind. Even the world says to us in Bible language, "As God thought so it came to pass."

But the great majority of people believe with Paul and Drummond, that LOVE is the world's greatest thing. It is seen that whenever love comes out into the open and runs a race with money or mind, that love most

always wins. Many a person has refused money for love and many a mind has forsaken the pursuit of knowledge for love.

A few years ago, a pastor was building a very fine church in Honolulu, and he had a letter from the architect, asking him to select an inscription to be placed high in the chancel above the pulpit and communion table. "I want it to be of eighteen letters," said the architect.

"It must be something suitable to the many and varying uses to which a church is put. It must have something to say to the people in many moods; something not out of harmony with the great experiences of life. It must be appropriate for a wedding, for a funeral. It must be appropriate for Good Friday, for Easter, for Memorial Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day and Forefathers' Day. It should speak to youth, to age, and inspire both. It must touch many races of people who come and speak to the different denominations that should gather in union meetings. It must have help for the sick, the troubled, the well, the successful. What text would go farthest to prevent war, and make all nations one in Christ Jesus. It must express the very heart and centre of the Gospel of Jesus as He lived, died and rose again. It must be in harmony with the Holy Spirit, the worker of Christ to-day. It must speak of salvation."

Well, the passage chosen was: LOVE NEVER FAILETH. What a fine sentiment! Many things have failed. War has failed; materialism has failed; science has failed; and the Church has failed. Health has failed, riches have failed, friends have failed. But across all

these failures comes the whisper of the still small voice from the New Testament: "Love never faileth."

We could translate the first chapter of John like this and do it no wrong: "In the beginning was love, and love was with God, and love was God. . . . All things were made by love, and without love was not anything made that was made. . . . In love was life; and the love was the light of men."

Out of love then came all things that were made, the water, the air, the sun, the life that we see everywhere in the earth and sea. Man was a love-created being, destined to grow up in love. To this end came all revealing, all teaching, all delivering, that man might have the atmosphere of love.

"Because of love, woman appeared that there might be answering eyes and arms, lips and heart. Two answering bodies, to make one circuit of love. Two centres of thought, to make one focus of desire. Two sources of being, to make one stream of life."

Out of this two-fold relationship there was the promise of a love product. "But the seed of the two-fold creature was a divided seed—that each might have part and joy in the giving. And in the hour of giving, there was supreme ecstacy of spirit, and complete dedication of love and the child was launched into this world in love.

"In the fullness of love, the child came, and the mother gathered up the fragrance and sweetness of living through her child. And the man held new life in his arms, and he discovered with her the larger love that God places in the family life. Such is the story of love in its mystical setting."

In a recent novel, *Maum Hannah,* a coloured woman is talking to Mary, and she says, "Dey is two diffunt kinds of love, SiMay-e. Two: eye-love an' heart-love. Eye love is tricky. Eye love will fool you. Eye love done fool plenty o' people. Two people'll meet and tink dey love. It seem so. De 'oman look good to de man; de man look good to de 'oman. Evy time dey meet dey talk pleasant talk. Den dey gone an' married together. But soon all-two'll wish to Gawd dey ain' never see one anudder.

"Heart-love is diffunt. Diffunt from eye-love as day is from night. Sometimes joy walk long wid em, but e go much wid sorrow. Heart-love and sorrow is one anudder's chillen. When you meets wid heart-love, peace'll leave you. But heart-love is brave. 'E kin sure smile in the face o' deat', honey.

"It's a diffunce between flesh chillen and heart chillen, too. Plenty o' lawful chillen is po' pitiful flesh chillen. A heart child is always a blossom. I dunno how-come-so, but it's so. Unex is a heart child, honey, and dat ought to make you glad, instead o' sad."

Yes, the world has a love-creed. Love is the one word that has the same meaning in all languages and is therefore, understood by all people. Whatever may be the mental attitude of the Eastern and Western worlds in religion, ethics and psychology, they do love and love is the same. Heads may differ but hearts never. "God is love," is felt and believed by all people.

A little girl whose body was helpless below the waist was in a Shrine hospital. When Frank C. Jones, Potentate, came, she put her arms around his neck. "Who's going to make you well?" he asked. "God

and Dr. Dillehunt," she replied. Yes, we are made to love, and love finds its joy in loving.

"A love creed reaches us at once. It is not elaborate; it requires no hard thinking. It speaks straight to the heart and the mind. This word 'love' contains the gospel we need. It comes to our wrong with forgiveness; it comes to our sadness with consolation; it comes to our restlessness with peace; it comes to our weakness with strength; it comes to our lack with supply; it comes to our ignorance with wisdom, and it comes to our poverty with riches."

To be told that "God is love," is to have the truest theology, the most complete creed of the Christian Faith, a social program for our day and a service that makes men our brothers.

Some one has said: "If I had to make God love me, I should give up in despair, for I never should be loved. God's love is not conditioned. Nothing I can ever do, nothing I can ever be, will make God love me more than He does. God does not only love me when I am good, but He loves me because He cannot help loving me. When I am good, He loves me with gladness, and when I am not good He loves me with sadness. God does not love me because Jesus Christ died for me and because I accept it. But Jesus Christ is the great gift and the outcome of the love that is forever, and my belief opens the door for the love to come streaming down into my life."

It does no good to know where God is, nor when God is, nor how God is, if we have no conception of what God is. The whole essence of God is set forth in one word—"LOVE."

God is great. If the external trappings of His estate be considered, God is great. Majesty is about Him, and He is King Eternal. But this majesty is not of vanity, pride, reserve, dignity or awe, but the majesty of love. We reverence Him with affection, as a child for its father.

God is all powerful. All the laws that exist in the world, He enacted and He enforces. No one can reverse or suspend one of His laws. They are inimitable, and sometimes frightful to us. It would seem as if we were thrown into the hopper of the mill of unfeelingness. But notice the relief that comes in the statement, "God is love." Every law is enacted and enforced from love. Love will carry the whole to its consummation; love will satisfy us at last. We may not know what love does now, but love will show hereafter.

"God is wisdom." Wisdom is the employment of the best means to attain the best ends. "God does not centre His wisdom in Himself but in love for His children. God would promote the happiness of His children, because His wisdom is the wisdom of love. God is not setting traps for men, but in love He is pointing the way from them. His wisdom is not that of personal ends, but for those who render homage and worship Him for that wisdom."

"God is power." We love power; we admire it; we seek it. It is true that we stand in awe of it now and then, and we feel helplessness coming upon us as we see its workings. There are displays of God's power that almost make the mind of man faint in apprehension. We feel that God can do what He wants to do with the lightnings, the winds and the rain, as well as with

the earthquake. What if He should turn all these things into torturing us? He never has. But may He not hereafter? What is the essence of God? Is it selfishness or love?

Until we believe that God is love, we cannot be happy. "We cannot serve God with comfort, nor yield Him anything but that compulsory service until we know that He is Love." When we see that Power is in the hands of Love we will find our Father. Forget not, "that he is strongest who loves most; he is wisest who lays out all the resources at his command in the interest of love." They are not the greatest who have gathered the most; they are not the strongest who have done most; they are not the wisest who know the most. But they are the greatest who love most.

Because God is love He cannot say an unloving thing: He cannot do an unloving thing. It is seen that we can trust Him forever and everywhere. He is essential love. We shall find Him everywhere we go. David said, "Thou art with me." Is not that enough? "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," is the pledge of God to us.

"Why is it that some find it hard to believe in God's love? One of the reasons is the tremendous struggle for existence that is waged among all living things. Man fights with man, and beast with beast and fish with fish. It would seem as if the world was a battlefield and every living thing in it is in arms and fighting for its life."

Then there is the problem of human pain and sorrow. It is hard to reconcile the dark shadows and burdens of life with divine love. Recently floods have come to

several portions of the country and great loss of life and property is reported. In some places of the old world famine stalks about because of the failure of crops. Can God be love and permit all this?

When an accident occurs men say, "How can God permit such a thing to happen?" Professor Haeckel raised the question whether there be an intelligent governor of the universe on the strength of a single accident, the premature death of a brilliant young man of science who promised to be a benefactor to the world.

Recently, a young lady, well born and educated, having fine promise in all things, met with reverses and seeing no hope or ray of light, plunged into the river and ended her life. She said in words left behind her: "I have been a Christian all my life and trusted in God, but He refused to help me in my trouble as I cried to Him, and now I die, denouncing Him as a delusion and a fraud."

"Many a man to-day is wandering about the streets of large cities, nearly maddened, wondering if God is love, and if so, why does He permit what is theirs, or why does He not help them in their distresses. Many a family is sitting at the table with scanty store, asking the same question and waiting for an answer that never comes. Is God love? is the despairing cry coming from the sick everywhere. Mothers are sewing long into the night for a little money to care for their children wondering if God really cares. The only answer seems to be a splash in the river and undertaker's shroud, and the grave digger's spade."

This is a dark picture of human relationships in this world, but perhaps if we look at this picture we shall

see some bright things in it after all. There is a story of a man looking at a picture that had clouds rushing here and there, and yet as he came close up to it, he discovered angels' faces in the clouds that were concealed from a distance, but observed close up to the picture.

Help is not always the proof of God's love, while suffering may be. Because God does not help, we cannot say He does not love. Because a father does not always help, is not a sign that he does not love. Too many get the idea that because the ravens have helped in time of need, and an angel unlocked the prison door, and money came from praying, it would always be so. But we know better if we think through the matter. The Bible shows that doors were not always unlocked by angels, and bread did not come to many, and yet "they died in the faith." The idea of help as a method of proving God's love has come to us because of our desires for help and ease. If trouble comes we have taken it for granted that God sent it upon us and therefore He is denounced or praised as it comes. We haven't discovered as we should that our troubles and poverty come to us because we have not been careful and prudent and that some law that God has wisely and lovingly instituted, has been broken. Relief is not always a test of God's love. "My grace shall be sufficient for thee," is the true test of love.

"Socrates must drink the hemlock, if he would be true; Latimer must be burned if he would hold his faith; Bunyan must go to prison if he would be true to his Christ; and Jesus must be nailed to the Cross, if He would save the world. For any of these to have denounced God because no angel appeared at the fatal

moment to extract the poison from the hemlock, or make impregnable to flame and stone, and prison and spike would have killed their heroism and branded them weaklings."

It may be some one reading what I am saying, has been thrown down by fate and trampled upon. All that makes life worth living has been taken from you. As I have been saying that "God is love," you have said: "He has not tasted life and has not drunk the cup of sorrow that I have, else he would not make such a statement." I would say to you: God has met me on the road and taken me along. And yet I have suffered and had troubles many, and have been ill and fought with "beasts." Yet, victory has been mine. May it not be that all this may be possible for you? Trust Him, go with Him. Empty yourself of all pride, hate and selfishness and sorrow and let Him come in. You may have had some hard battles, but in the end it will be the good fight of faith, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Here is humanity in the making; there is humanity redeemed forever.

The taking away of fear is not always proof that God is love. Many come to God through fear. It is not the best way of coming. I know the Bible says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Fear has helped the world in many ways. Fear warns man against the beast and helps to protect him from the elements. In the presence of disease, fear searches out a remedy. The fear of hunger promotes plowing and growing and saving. "We might say that God ordained fear as an alarm bell for maintaining the integrity of man's being. The Nantucket reef, with hid-

den rocks that threaten ships, is guarded by fog bells that night and day ring out warning and alarm. Thus fear is ordained as the primal impulse to secure man's safety and urge him along the paths of prosperity, safety and peace."

"But we must remember that fear is only a root-virtue. And while the tree needs a root, man cares to approach the tree when it attains unto fruit ripened in love's warm atmosphere. Fear is the force that releases man from his animal fetters. But love is the force that gives life and sunshine and growth towards God."

"As the summer, with its silent warmth, avails more for harvest than can winter with its majesty of storm and cold, so the inspiration of love achieves what the inspiration of duty cannot do. What a garden is in summer, filled with perfume, shrubs and flowers and the song of birds, that fear and conscience are, when shone upon by love. But without love, law and duty are like unto a garden in the winter, bare, leafless, forsaken of birds, beaten upon by winds."

Fear, untouched by love, is the arch enemy of mankind. It dogs the footsteps of every person and is the cause of untold suffering. It tends to paralyse both mental and physical activity, and is the chief cause of disease and the main factor for its propagation. "When fear disappears in love, the foundation of disease is gone."

Fear is a state of consciousness, and it is useless to try and get rid of it by material means. No one believes that a drug can reach what men call the seat of intelligence and alter the emotions, the feelings and the thoughts. A drug may stupefy consciousness and so

for awhile paralyse thought, but as the drug loses its work, the old feelings return.

"God's highway is built of laws, social, physical, domestic, financial and spiritual. Beside the roadway are thorn hedges, so that when the pilgrim wanders away he may be called sharply to his danger. Every aching heart and body means God's whisper of love, saying, 'Beware, beware!' "

"God's punishment is always done in love. There is a justice without love. Many a parent fails here. Punish in love, and the punishment will be different and remedial. Love can use a knife, and pray and work in tenderness, all at the same time. The blacker David's sin, the more solicitous the seeking love of God. Adam may be punished and driven out of Paradise but God seeks him, in the question, Where art thou, Adam?"

"God is love," does not mean indulgent love. People who really love their children best, are sometimes stern with them. You do not love your children enough when you let them become spoiled, given to bad habits and vicious ways.

A writer declares that the American people have deteriorated because of the too much indulgence shown in the bringing up of their children. "Many a mother has given her child to the surgeon to be operated upon for the better living of her child. Indulgent love would have saved the child from such an ordeal, but wise love would save him from being crippled."

Thus it is with God. He will not be indulgent in His love and allow us to go and do as we please if such a course is against the best prospects of our life. God may love more truly in denying than in granting a

favour. Many a father has said, "No," instead of "Yes," and this was done in love.

That the greatest proof of God's love is a fact and not a theory, turn to deeds and not words. The loudest protestations may be empty; love's argument is service. Love's commendation lies in sacrifice. All the DARK FACTS IN LIFE, God overwhelms by the one proof of the greatest fact in the world's history,—"God so loved that He gave His Son."

Turn now to Calvary, to the Cross, and by the sight of the crucified One, learn the greatness of God's love. Who is this that hangs between two thieves with pierced hands and feet? Who is this whose back is sore and big with scars; whose face is foul with spittle? See! He is sorrowful even unto death! Hark! Hear that cry; "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Did ever mother or patriot, or human lover in the zeal of love make any sacrifice to be compared with that of God, when He gave His only begotten Son to shame and death, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish?" Ah! measuring the love of God by such a test as this, we touch its heights and depths and lengths and breadths, and then do we cry with Paul, "It passeth knowledge."

Looking at Calvary, I hear the Lord say, "Come let us reason together, do not I love thee?" Yes, Lord, I have reasoned with Thee; I have marshalled all my arguments and all my facts, and I cannot but confess that by the facts of Calvary, Thou hast won, "Thou art the God of Love."

"The death of Jesus revealed what evil could inflict and what love could do. Love became an eternal offer-

ing for sin; nothing but love in its greatness will explain the cross. When we gaze upon the cross we can never seriously again doubt the love of God. All difficulties will not cease; all problems will not disappear. Much that was dark before remains so still. But we can never doubt the love of God again. God has convinced us of His love, 'in that while we were sinners Christ died for us.' "

How can you secure this love of God? By contemplating it. Love begets love. "It is a process of induction. You put a piece of iron in the presence of an electrified body, and that piece of iron after awhile becomes electrified. As long as you leave the two side by side, they are both magnets. Remain side by side with Jesus Christ, who loved you and gave Himself for you, and you will love Him with all the power of your life."

There is a strange power in the consciousness of being loved. It will stir our hearts and lives and win us as nothing else. Do you remember the story of St. Clare, in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. There was a huge African negro by the name of Scipio that no one could handle. He was sold to Alfred, St. Clare's brother. One day he knocked the overseer down and ran away for the woods. He was captured after he had killed some of the dogs and had been shot by one of the men. Alfred had promised the slave to St. Clare if he found him, and now he came forward and prevented the rest from killing the man. St. Clare took the slave home, gave him a good bed and food and nursed the man himself until he got well. Then he gave the slave his freedom, but he refused to take it. When the cholera broke out

and everybody fled, it was Scipio who tended his master until he saw him well and then he caught the disease and died. Love won the day, when nothing else could.

And this is God's way with us. "God's love is a garden filled with sweet perfumes: God's love is a gallery stored with noble pictures of the future; it is a jewel case in which flash the gems of what we are to be: It is a medicine chest holding all balms and remedies for our needs; it is a belfry from which rings out the celestial music of heaven." It is a story of the world's greatest Lover, Jesus Christ, seeking after us, until He finds and saves. It is a pardon from our sins, giving deliverance and making us heirs of all things in the world to come. It is a passport to the Eternal City where joy, peace, and happiness reign forever and ever. May this love be yours in all its richness and grace!

"What is the beginning? Love.
  What the course? Love still.
What is the goal? The goal is
  Love on the happy hill.
Is there nothing, then, but Love,
  Search we sky or earth?
There is nothing out of Love
  Hath perpetual worth.
All things flag, but only Love,
  All things fail or flee,
There is nothing left but Love
  Worthy you or me."

X

THE WORLD'S GREATEST EXCELLENCE: KINDNESS

"Be ye kind one to another."—EPH. 4:32

IN one of Dr. George A. Gordon's books, the author asks this question: "What is the highest human excellence?" If this question were put to a group of men and women, the replies would be numerous and interesting sidelights of life. I can conceive that such words as love, loyalty, sympathy, cheerfulness, virtue, and kindness, would be among the replies. And all these would be needed to bring out human excellence. But put the question to a child, and the one great answer would be kindness.

As I go back into the morning of my own life, I can recall many people and many of their characteristics. Many were fine people, but they did not appeal to me, for they were gloomy, grouchy, and cross to us children. Some of my relatives did not grip me as others did. Those that live with me to-day in pleasant memory are those who were kind to me. In fact, one neighbour was so kind to me, that it was a sort of ordination for my after-life, which has had a profound influence upon my work and preaching.

What is kindness? It stands for high consideration for those you meet; an interest of good, a racial sym-

pathy for mankind. It is taking an interest in another for their comfort and help.

On a railway train, running on a branch road from a great city to the suburbs, a little incident was noted by quick eyes that gives a good definition of kindness in action. A woman, evidently a foreigner and poor, was returning from the city and was encumbered by parcels and a baby and two older children holding on to her skirts. When the brakeman announced her station she was bewildered and greatly impeded in her efforts to leave the car. She was not quite sure of the place and she could not manage all her children and bundles. A tall young fellow, well-dressed, had taken a seat near-by, but was apparently lost in a book. But he was not, for immediately he arose, seized the heavy bundles and gave a hand to one of the children and assisted the whole party out of the car, first ascertaining that they were at the right place of their journey. As he turned to enter the car, he lifted his hat to the woman, and resumed his seat and book, as though he had done nothing uncommon. That was kindness.

"It is given to the violet to ride forth upon perfumed wings. It is given to the lark to put forth its sweetness to the passer-by." It is given to the sun to warm the earth with its shining; it is given to water to quench the thirst of the needy, and "it is given to man to radiate kindness that shall have all these qualifications to make divine touch with human life."

Paul saw in his keen observing way that nothing helped the early church and the life of the people like being kind one toward the other. We feel that in the light of our introduction, that we are right in saying,

that kindness is "the world's greatest human excellence."

Why is kindness such an excellence? Because it helps Christ and His work more than any other of the human radiations. Paul saw this when he said: "Let every one please his neighbour for his good to edification." We are not to please ourselves! What a startling statement! It seems to break every bone in our body and upset all our methods of living. It roasts us before a slow fire. To help the ugly, the impatient, the spiteful; to be kind to such people! Well, we do not intend to do it. This is too much Calvary. We would rather be kind to those who appreciate and reciprocate. But we are here to win the ugly and crude and sinful to Christ. How can we do it? Only by kindness and pleasing him for his good.

The best can be won for children through kindness. Human nature can be drawn better than driven. The wind closes the flower, but the sun opens it up. The story is told of a nurse who took an ugly thing of a child, that gave no sign of feeling or interest, until one day she spoke to it kindly and stroked it in love, and then signs of life and interest were noted and the little one smiled and began to develop normally.

Thomas Arnold of Rugby once spoke harshly to a dull boy, and, later, the boy came to him with tearful eyes, and in a half sobbing voice exclaimed: "But why are you angry, sir? I am doing my best." Arnold learned, then, that a lesson easy for one mind may be hard for another. So he begged the boy's pardon and recognized the principle of kindness that afterward made him a prince of teachers.

It is seen then, that kindness kindles hope. In every human life are resources of power that can be touched and reached for large life and usefulness. How are these resources or reserves reached? Sometimes by outsiders, teachers, parents, lovers or friends. But even more often these resources are touched by a kindly act, that awakens the better within. If we should take out of this world the forces that are human, made by kindness through others, we would make the world poor. Only heaven with its revelations can show us the results of human kindness.

Have you ever thought of the power of a word? There are words that scratch like nettles, that burn like fire, that pierce like needles, that stab like bayonets, that bruise like stones, that kill like bullets. On the other hand there are words that soothe like water, that stimulate like sunshine, that strengthen like bread. Our language not only manufactures literature, but it determines destiny. How careful we ought to be about our words. A minister one time gave a charge to the people of a church at the installation of a new pastor. Among the things he said was this: "Don't go home after church and carve up your minister at the dining table. It would seem that in some families this is a part of the Sunday bill of fare." But I have something better to say, and it is this: don't carve up anyone at your table or elsewhere.

Many of our words are leading to human passion and selfishness, to human ignorance and guile, to inflaming and debasing mankind. Jesus said: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." A word is but a vibration of the air, a

pulse of sound, or a figure stamped on paper, yet it can wound like a knife or heal like balsam.

> "Words are mighty, words are living;
> Serpents with their venomous stings,
> Or bright angels, crowding round us,
> With heaven's light upon their wings;
> True or false, that never dies;
> Every word man's lips have uttered
> Echoes in God's skies."

In the family, words are the harp which always needs to be kept in tune in order to secure domestic happiness. If a wrong chord is touched, the jar is felt upon many lives. In many families words seem to fall like dew, or as the gentle showers of spring that refresh and beautify nature. In other families, words are like hailstones that damage everywhere.

Let the business man know that the Bible says, "Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth." The Bible says, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

We are all authors, painters, sculptors and teachers. Our conscience is the recording secretary and time reveals what we have accomplished. We should be careful how we use our words, for we must give an account of them some day.

Some years ago, a woman who had been talking until the whole neighbourhood was in an uproar, went to her priest for absolution of her sins. He replied, "Go, gather a basketfull of thistle seeds and scatter them all over the neighbourhood where you have been talking." After some days she returned, and told him that she had

done as he had bidden her. "Now," said he, "go gather up all of those thistle seeds and bring them to me, and I will give you absolution." "Alas!" cried the woman, "I never can do that." "Just so," said the priest, "and the mischief you have done with that tongue of yours, will never be undone, either."

Words fitly spoken, will live to help and inspire human souls to be better. What light is to the bulb; what wisdom is to the mind; what music is to the words; what life is to the body; what the spirit is to man, that is kindness to the world.

Kindness kindles hope. Out in the world there is a great battle going on in human souls. Some despair of reaching the goal they believe they are fitted for in life. There are many difficulties in the way; there are so many things to be adjusted, that many a heart gives up and remains commonplace. On the other hand many a man of standing to-day can testify that a kind word inspired and helped to surmount these difficulties.

A few years ago, a lawyer, moving through a crowd, felt a hand in his pocket. He caught the hand and turned, and looked into the robber's face. He was haggard and worn, both by hunger and fear. The lawyer said, "Why did you try to rob me?" "Because sir," the man replied, "I am out of work and hungry." "Come with me," said the lawyer. Taking him into a restaurant he ordered breakfast for two. When the meal was over, the robber told the lawyer that he had been imprisoned for a term of years, and that now that he was an ex-convict, he found himself refused a job by his reputation. "I have no name," he said bitterly,

"and no future. No one trusts me or cares for me. Nothing is left me to do but return to a life of crime and rob to live. What can a man do without a name?" This last question impressed the lawyer, and taking the man by the hand he said: "For forty years I have borne the name of James Henderson unsullied. You say you have no name. I will give you mine. James Henderson! take your name out into the world and keep it, as you receive it, clean and honourable." "Do you mean it," cried the man brokenly. "Of course I mean it," said the lawyer, "and to prove it I will recommend you in the name of James Henderson, to a firm of manufacturers with which I have some influence."

The lawyer procured his new friend the post he had promised, and fifteen years later, he had a visitor, and upon his card was the name, "James Henderson." The visitor said: "I have called to tell you that, to-day, I have been made a partner in the firm you recommended me to fifteen years ago, and you see all that I am I owe to your noble generosity and the gift of your name. The name of James Henderson is still unsullied."

Kindness inspires. The teachers that did us the most good were those that were kind. Those that were brusque, caustic and sometimes sarcastic, hindered us from our best. Liberation of mind comes much faster from those who are thoughtful and kind than from those who are selfish. To look at a pupil to find fault and criticize is to lose him. But to work with him in kindness is to keep him, and save him and bring out the resources in him.

What the sun is to the flower, the water to the steam,

the electricity to the house, the engine to the cars, the gasoline to the auto, the elevator to the building, so is kindness to the life of man.

James Whitcomb Riley gives us food for thought when he sings:

"When a man ain't got a cent and he's
feeling kind of blue
An' the clouds hang dark an' heavy,
an' won't let the sunshine through,
It's a great thing, O, my brethren, for
a feller just to lay
His hand upon your shoulder in a
friendly sort o' way!
It makes a man feel curious, it makes
the teardrops start,
An' you sort o' feel a flutter in the
region of the heart;
You can look up and meet his eyes;
you don't know what to say
When his hand is on your shoulder in
a friendly sort o' way.
Oh, the world's a curious compound,
with its honey and its gall,
With it cares and bitter crosses, but
a good world, after all.
An' a good God must have made it—
leastways, that's what I say,
When a hand is on my shoulder in a
friendly sort o' way."

Kindness makes allowance. That is the mother way of life; that is the Christ way of dealing with men. It is these "allowances" that save us. "If thou, Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Who could be saved if it were not for these allowances! The good that there is in a bad thing, a bad heart, is

out of sight; love through allowances can see further than can indifference or malignity. "Love believeth all things," is the rule of kindness. A true father loves his child through everything. God loves us through everything. "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though Thou tookest vengeance of their inventions."

It is said that once there was a good Christian woman who was kind to all, and never known to speak of any person in disparagement. One of her children knowing this, determined to test the mother, and so said, "Mother, what do you think of the devil?" "My dear," she answered, "I think it would be well if we would all be as diligent in doing our work as he is in doing his." There is much in getting the habit of being kindly in dealing with others, making allowances of their faults and mistakes, yea, even their sins. Such people come in brightness and helpfulness and are doing what God is always and forever doing. Men can come to God as Esau came to his father and say, "Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." No one need be left out, even an Esau can come and be received, forgiven and taken into the family life again. There may be a deserved rejection. The Psalmist revealed it when he said, "O, forsake me not utterly." But mercy's fullness of kindness is seen in the statement, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." All can have room in the allowances of God, if they will accept them.

Where shall we begin this kindness of life? Probably in the last place we should choose, at home. Our nearest neighbour is there, in our own family. Paul has a clew for us here, when he says: "Let them learn to show piety

at home." And the giving of pleasure and kindness is a part of piety.

What a change would come over many a household if every member earnestly endeavoured to please every other member! What more beautiful spot out of heaven than a home in which parents and children, servants and guests vie together to show kindness!

There are homes the direct opposite of this. You have seen or heard of nitro-glycerine factories out in the country, where men go tip-toeing about for fear some noise or jar would create an explosion. In how many families do mothers and children go tip-toeing around for fear of arousing or crossing a tired or quick-tempered father? And how true it is to-day that the father and mother have to be careful so as not to arouse a son or daughter for fear of an explosion.

We are told that Carlyle's wife gave up her own work and time to please her husband. Long before her end came, she was submerged in the details of his life. One day, two distinguished American authors called upon him. For an hour the author poured forth a tirade against the commercial spirit of his day, while the good wife never opened her lips. At last Carlyle ceased talking, and there was a silence for a time. Suddenly Carlyle thundered, "Jane, stop breathing so loud." Now, long years before, Jane had stopped doing everything else except breathe. A few days afterwards, she took her bed and soon ceased to breathe. A few weeks later, Carlyle reading through her journal, found that she had starved to death for want of affection. Only when it was too late, did the husband realize that his fame was largely his wife's. Then did the old man begin his pil-

grimage to his wife's grave, where Froude often found him murmuring, "If I had only known! If I had only known!" All Carlyle's gifts and talents are marred by the harshness he exhibited.

Some parents are like March winds that cause people to go away to a better climate and environment. Children can be retained at home longer by kindly ways and words than by December storms and February winds.

Beecher says, "Some men and women move through their home, their business and their whole life as a band of music moves down the street, flinging out pleasure on every side. They fill the air with their presence and sweetness as the orchards in April fill the air with their perfume."

Some business men ought to bring into play this thought of kindness. It would bring the best of returns, bridge the troubles between labour and capital; draw the clerk to the customer, and enforce the rules of Christ-likeness. "Even Christ pleased not Himself," but led a self-sacrificing, self-displeasing life for our sakes. He pleased not Himself by not staying in heaven to enjoy its rest and glory. He came down to help bear our load, and lead us back to our Father's house.

A soldier, worn out in his country's service, took to the violin for earning a living. He was found in the streets of Vienna, playing his instrument but after awhile his hand became feeble and tremulous and he could make no more, rich music. One day, as he sat there weeping, a man passed along and said: "My friend, you are too old and feeble; give me your violin." Taking the instrument he began to play such wonderful music that the people stopped, and the coin poured in

and the stranger said, "Now put that coin in your pocket." He did so, and then the violinist played some more, and again the hat was well filled with coin. The player handed back the violin and passed on—and the whisper went out, "Who is he? Who is he?" It was Paganini just doing a bit of kindness.

And how shall we increase this trait of kindness? Chiefly by living with the Master. Dr. Gordon well says, "He took twelve quarrelsome men, subdued them to his own spirit and sent them forth apostles of kindness." What Jesus has done, He can still do to-day.

Modern life has come upon us so fast that we have been demoralized in the old thoughtfulness and kindness of other days. We do things in the mass for stricken countries and people. But the individual contact and interest has been set aside too much. We must let ourselves out as well as hold ourselves in. Our best service is not in restraint but in release. Many young hearts about us are plastic, waiting to be impressed. Kindness will mould much more more than severity. Marcus Aurelius, travelling and fighting through the barbarous fringes of his empire, wrote: "I must be true; as if an emerald should keep saying to itself: 'However other stones may shine, I must be a true emerald and keep my colour.'"

Let us not moan like the nerveless Hamlet:

> "The world is out of joint; O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right."

Rather let us cry with Paul, "Give none offence . . . even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."

XI

THE WORLD'S GREATEST SIN: SELFISHNESS

"We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please ourselves."—ROM. 15:1

OLD as the world is, and active as it has been, it has not produced a good average human character. It is too true that man has the ability to produce nobleness or degradation, love or hate, sincerity or deception, sympathy or selfishness. Man's world stands ready for goodness or badness, the noble or the mean, the spiritual or the sensual, for life or for death.

"In the East, where thousands of acres of roses are grown for the joy of their perfumes, there are as many acres of poppies grown for the delirium and ruin of the multitude."

Between these two relationships of life, man must make his choice. He must select and move on, and in this lies his fate, and that of others. The grains which will make the bread for the table, will also help make a drink fully capable of destroying the individual and the home. Strange man! ready to grow fruits that enrich and equally ready to produce drinks that destroy. Happy is he, if like Peter he give up his sin and hold to his Master; or miserable is he, if like Judas

he cling to his sin until it bring an ignominous defeat and death.

We know the world's greatest excellence, for did not Paul say, "The greatest of all is charity"; but we may not know the world's greatest sin, which is SELFISHNESS. The prevailing thought of the times is the MYSELF. Too many think life exists for me, for my pleasure, for my profit; stand clear of my want, my way, for I want and I will have.

Read George Meredith's *The Egotist,* and see an exposition of selfishness pictured in the character of Sir Willoughby Patterne. He lays bare all the hidden disease of this man's soul and shows that every beating of the nerve, every throb of the heart, every thought of the mind, is selfishness. As you read this book, you will pause many times and shudder for you will find out something about yourself that you did not suspect, or of which you were faintly conscious, as a skeleton in the closet, known but judiciously ignored.

Literature is a picture of humanity. It is here we see what man is. Reading great books, and above all the Bible, we are able to construct lines that are full of resemblances and that say: "Thou art the man!"

Back of every sin of whatever name is selfishness. It is the prime mover of every wrong attitude of life in the soul, and one's relationship to others. The murderer, the thief, the sensualist, the falsifier, the covetous, and every other sinner you can think of, have back of them selfishness. If selfishness could be blotted out of the world, we would soon have a heavenly life here. The trouble with this old world is, we are seeking our own

and not the things of others; we are pleasing ourselves and not bearing the infirmities of the weak.

In *The Spectator* for 1712, Addison satirizes the emptiness of many lives in his day. In doing this he brings to us the diaries of those whose pictures he gives us. One is that of a man who had nothing to put into his diary but the time he got up in the morning and the time he went to bed; the fact that he smoked three pipes of tobacco, read the papers, what he ate for dinner and then went to the coffee house. It is the satire, not of a vicious man but an idle man frittering away his time in trifles. Addison recommends to his readers that they keep a journal of their lives for one week that they may see the selfishness of their living.

He gives another extract of a fashionable woman whom he calls Clarinda, detailing for five days the time spent in dressing, in washing and combing her pet dog's hair, in shopping a bit, seeing company and doing a little leaf on a flowered handkerchief. "What a satire on selfish living! What a figure she would make among posterity, were the whole history of her life published like these five days!"

A few years ago, General Booth wanted to send a message by wire or cable to every Salvation Army Post in the world. His treasurer said: "General, telegrams are costly." The General replied, "I can send a message in one word." One of his staff said, "What is the magic word?" The General replied: "OTHERS." The message was sent; "OTHERS!"

In the story of *The Beast and Jungle,* by Henry James, we have organized selfishness. In that story, John Marcher and May Barton live and make their

revelations of life. John Marcher is incarnated selfishness, and May Barton organized sweetness. The woman gives and the man takes, and in the processes of life the woman dies and the man lives. He survives with a constant thought—something very strange and wonderful will one day happen to him. What that something was he felt that May Barton knew, before she died, but would not give the secret to him. It was the custom of John Marcher to visit the grave of May Barton now and then. Standing one day in his customary place, he chanced to see another man standing nearby and before another grave—a man whose face was ravaged with grief. What was passing through the other man's soul, was not passing, and never had passed through John Marcher's soul. Going to that other grave Marcher read on a stone erected to a wife's memory the cause and significance of that other man's grief. Then came the truth to the soul of John Marcher. He had never loved May Barton for her sake—he had loved her only for his own sake. And immediately the beast of his own self-vision and remorse struck at him, and carried down, down into the abyss of his life, the hell of his selfishness. Thus the moral laws of God strike at us, bringing their terrors and their despair.

See the selfish man! He acquires wealth. What does he do with it? He acquires an estate, builds his mansion, stores it with comforts and luxuries, and betakes himself to golf and travel and social retirement. Here is an educated man. His delight is in his study, away from the tumult and strife of the day. A few smokes, a little recreation and a quiet life, are his efforts of living.

Here is a woman with high social standing, fine culture and means. She selects others of the same circle, and it is cards, teas, dress and a little charity work, and sometimes club work, which constitute her life. But this has a lot of selfishness in it.

Rich men are to bear the infirmities of the weak; wise men are to bear the mistakes of the ignorant; strong men are to help the feeble; cultured people are to help the rude, and the spiritual minded man must help to bring up the material man. You say this is against nature! Well, it is not against grace. As the rain and the sun minister to the needs of the plant and make it grow and bloom, so the world of grace ministers to the human need. Man needs the work of sympathy and helfulness in his life, if he comes to his place of usefulness. As the painter paints for the people; as the sculptor carves for society; as the musician works to inspire man, so man works to help his fellow-man.

"It is said of some Eastern nation, that if a guest admires anything in the home of the host, the host must give that object to the guest. It would be cruel to send the guest home with empty hands." What is thus told in fancy of some unhistoric state may be told in truth of man's relationship to the weaker and needier men about him. We have to give; we live to help; we go to reach—"others."

Hear a parable. A couple of shining dewdrops, glistening on a green leaf near the top of a tall tree, fell into conversation. One said: "I propose to lead an independent life. I shall sally forth into the world presently and make a record for myself." But the other said, "If I can find anybody to join me, I propose to

unite my energies with others, and thus contribute to some general movement for the benefit of the world." Just then the jolly old sun pushed his face down between the branches of the tree, and drank up the first dewdrop, which was never heard of again. But the wind, in a friendly spirit, brushed the other dewdrop into the brook that babbled at the foot of the tree. There it found companions, and in their society went laughing toward the river, and hence through many miles of happy pilgrimage to the sea, and all the while it bore its part in sweetening the land and refreshing the souls of men. Friend, if you want to live in the kingdom of grace, you must give yourself that you may save yourself.

Let us take another view of selfishness. The man who only thinks of himself, cheats himself, narrows his sphere and prevents the development of his best self. This covers much more than we have time to delineate. Sometimes a man in old age begins to practise generosity. In early life his business is as hard as iron. He is keyed up to a certain amount of money he desires to reach. When he has reached this goal, he will give. What a loss to life in its true unfoldment!

In certain parts of the old world women live in houses whose windows do not open to the outside, but only into a little court. It is harmful for them to see the sunrise, or sunset, or to see the objects of street or field. How seclusive such lives! Yes, but no more so than the life that shuts itself up to work and making money. We are to get out from under our own little sphere to the "Mind that was in Christ Jesus." Behold the world! See its

needs, its opportunity, and then realize you are to go out into it and help it, reform it, make it finer, better, truer, richer because you contribute to it a life and not just a living.

"The march of Napoleon over Europe was for selfishness, and the march of men over the fields of commerce for what they can gain for themselves, is pure selfishness. The gains of this world cannot come in the wealth of money, education, social standing, or fame. If it were so, then Rome, Athens, Spain, Peru and even Mexico had all these in the years that are past. Utility must interpret and guide men if they are to be worthwhile in the world. In order to help the world, money must contain the power to awaken what is best in the human soul; education must advance morality; science must help spirituality; and society must lead upward. MAN WILL NEVER KNOW HOW GREAT IS HIS SOUL AND POSSESSIONS UNTIL HE HAS SAT FOR AWHILE UNDER THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. Here a man finds himself for this and the other world. Nothing in our age is good or great unless it creates and exalts manhood and womanhood. We are here to make a good world. Religion asks us if we are faithful to our task."

When selfishness dominates one's soul it is like the hot wind that blows on the orchard, the garden, the fields and dries up the streams and parches the grain and leaves disaster behind. Nature is full of human welfare and man ought to be as good. But when the farmer is less than his farm, the writer less than his music, the preacher less than his sermon, the clerk less than his

trade; the Christian less than his profession, the business man less than his store, all is a calamity and a wrong use of life.

"Selfishness is always waste. It knows nothing of economy. It has what it wants and cares for nothing else. Certain elements crystallize and form the diamond, so human actions crystallize and make the soul. If the Creator makes roses by means of earth and sunbeams, so He makes principles through the intellect of man and utters His love through the human heart. No one knows how to live or what it is to live until he has reached the power to think for his neighbour, his God and his own."

The quest for self, for wealth, for knowledge, when selfishly pursued, is a course that soon exhausts itself and is barren of peace. Dives was rich but he was not happy. Faust had knowledge, but the devil had a mortgage on his soul. The prodigal was having a great time, but he was moving toward want and the loss of money and friends.

"We would not say that there is no gratification in selfishness or doing wrong. Stolen fruit is attractive or it would not be stolen. There is a zest in the intrigue, in the questionable pleasure, in the course of doubtful credit. But look out into the night! Suddenly there is flare and a swish as a meteor rushes across the heavens, while over it shines the pale, mild north star. There may be a tameness in doing right as compared with the excitement of doing wrong, but the difference is that between the meteor that flashes with momentary brilliance in the sky and then is dissolved in the atmosphere or drops dead and cold into the earth. Out of in-

trinsic excellence of the right, the true and the good, come the happiness of life and the repose of the Christian."

Dickens' Scrooge is an immortal creation of literature upon selfishness. He is the arch-miser of story, the Shylock of Romance. The grasping greed of the man wrinkled his face, and lent a squeak to his voice. One day he sees the ghost of his old partner bound with a chain made of cash boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds and ponderous purses wrought in steel. "You are fettered," ventured Scrooge, trembling all over. "I wear the chain I forged in life," replied the ghost. "I made it link by link, and yard by yard. Is its pattern strange to you? Perhaps you do not know," continued the ghost, "that you carry a coil yourself. It was full as heavy as this seven Christmas eves ago. You have laboured on it since. Its links are large and lusty to-day."

Dickens thus speaks to us that selfishness will bring its reward, and that the solitude of Ebenezer Scrooge is a perpetual warning from the leaves of fiction.

Tennyson also gives a moral lesson on this same subject in *The Palace of Art*. He writes an allegory of a soul that loved beauty only. The Palace is a wonderful place of beauty. It is dedicated to loveliness. The rooms are filled with the painter's art, portraits of great poets, floors in choice mosaic and beautiful lights. There lived the soul alone unto herself.

> "She took her throne;
> She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
> To sing her songs alone."

But, after awhile, came her punishment, despair, confusion of mind, fear of solitude, terrible silence and a hatred of life and death. At last she cried:

> "What is it that will take away my sin
> And save me lest I die?"

Out of this repentant cry came escape when she said: "I will return to humility and to love, to lowly life with men and women."

> "Make me a cottage, in the vale," she said,
> "Where I may mourn and pray."

"Love is of the valley; and when love is learned I will return to my palace; for when I love, and return with others there, then shall I live again in glory."

All sin is selfishness, and selfishness is certain, if it continues, to become relentlessly cruel. The prodigal could not get any from those in the far country, nor from those who had taken his money and good times. Society has never been the saviour of its prodigals and never will.

The forcing process in life is worth considering. Tell a young man that he will become a better doctor, lawyer, banker, merchant or editor, if he will prepare himself for the coming occupation, and he will not deny your premises. The young must either assume a future or else ruin it. No questions will ever surpass the questions of worth. "All things false, all things untrue are in the minority because God is not on their side." All who trust in selfishness must go down and fail in life, God is against them. "Life must have merit enough in it to keep it sweet, if it is to succeed."

Look at God's fields! "They are carpeted with grass;

the dewdrops sparkle like diamonds, His vines are festoons; His trees make Gothic arches with their branches; the sun is His light, and the birds His choir."

Look at man! He can be like a river carrying help and life everywhere, or like a freshet, when full of ungoverned force, doing injury here and there. He can be like fire, warming, helping the world about him, or raging with fury, carrying destruction in his path. He can be like the sun, warming and opening up nature, or carrying burning rays of influence that destroy and kill.

Once there was a wild dog moving stealthily through the forest seeking whom he might devour. He had been a friend of man, but now he had deteriorated and was seeking his prey. Cruel he leaped for blood, wherever he went.

Once the plain rose bloomed in the woodland. But toil and science and the genius of man stood by this "sweet briar" and grafted it with something better and to-day the world is filled with roses, beautiful, sweet and charming to man.

A stranger falling upon the earth in the northern regions, would go back and say he had found a world of ice; landing at the equator, he would declare he had found a planet of flowers.

Thus it can be from observing man. If he is selfish, he is not a representative of God. If he is goodness, kindness, helfulness, he is the son of God, and represents his religion rightly.

Earthly kingdoms are founded upon wealth, wisdom, power and social standing. But God's kingdom is founded on holiness of character. And though we achieve in the earthly kingdom greatness and power, the

poorest child who has known God's love and accepted His spirit, will be greater than those whose sole inheritance is in the kingdoms of this world. Selfishness prompted the Crown Prince of Rumania to renounce his rights to the throne, and, to-day, he would give all he possesses if he could recall that choice, and have what was his by rights to-day, if he had been true, kingship over his people.

Nathaniel Hawthorne in *Mosses from an Old Manse,* tells of the singular occurrence, in imagination of course, that men, being wearied of their foibles and the useless frippery of their life, determined to make an end of it all. And carts and wagons and trains carried into a distant prairie all the follies of men; their titles, their decorations, their barrels of strong drink, all the arms and munitions of war, and all the books that were injuring the world. And there, with great joy, a fire was kindled and all of them were burnt. There stood beside the pyre a company of thieves and drunkards and murderers, who were in great trouble because their occupation had gone. But the devil came to comfort them and said: "You need not be disturbed, because these wiseacres, while they have cast so much into the fire, have not cast into it the one thing which is the perpetual cause of all these things, and that is the human heart." We agree to all this, but let us go further and say until selfishness is cast out, evil and sin have their greatest originator left to carry on the worst of life.

And what is the virtue most needed to-day to overcome selfishness? It is helpfulness—"Others."

Once upon a time there lived a king and a queen who had a beautiful daughter. She was so amiable and good

that the queen of the fairies heard of her and determined to reward her. So she went to the queen at her palace. The queen said, "I have heard of your beauty and kindness and have come to reward you. Here are three wishes. Choose which you want and it is yours, always. First, you may be a bird, to go from one end of the earth to the other with no one to say nay or to interfere. Second, you may be a butterfly, with no care in the world—only to be gay and happy and beautiful and to charm those who want to be happy during a summer day. Third, you may be a flower whose sweet perfume will cheer those who are unhappy, soothe them when they are sick, and you will be a cheerful companion always."

Then the princess said: "If I were a bird I might fly too far from my home and friends and forget to return, so I will not be a bird. If I were a butterfly I might think more of my pleasure and ease than of my duty, and my beauty might cause me to be vain. So I will be the flower, to help and comfort those who may be in need."

Then the fairy queen waved her wand and the princess became the flower "Mignonette."

Greater yet, the choice man may make with his God. He may be the channel through which the love, grace and power of God may go to save his fellow-man. He may be the conductor, through which may pour the words and light of the heavenly oncoming. He may be the window through which may be seen the glory of God's setting and furnishings in a human soul, so attractive that others shall desire the same Workman and Furnisher.

"I need you," says Christ, coming to us with pleading words. "I cannot save the world alone. Give Me your help. I must have your hands, your ears, your feet, your hearts, your heads, your lips, if I am to win this world to Myself." And we are here to aid Christ in His saving of the world, created for that end, even as He.

It is said that Alexander became Alexander, because he took with him on his campaigns, not books, not strategy, but Homer, and "kept soaking his soul in him." We have a far nobler pattern, if, only, we care to use Him.

If you have a faculty that is weak, whip it up. Give yourself to the chemistry of love, the mathematics of honest dealing, the metaphysics of faith, the philosophy of the plan of salvation in Christ Jesus, and the application of the Sermon on the Mount, and you win all that is blessed and glorious, and avoid the sin of selfishness.

XII

THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOK: THE BIBLE

"Of making many books there is no end."—ECCLES. 12:12.
"We will give ourselves . . . to the ministry of the world."
—ACTS 6:4

A FEW years ago, Rudyard Kipling was awarded the gold medal of the Royal Society of Literature, "for distinguished literary achievement," and his speech of acceptance contained this phrase: "Quite a dozen writers have achieved immortality in the last twenty-five hundred years." He did not tell us who these twelve might be, and so we do not know the books they wrote. But he raised a question of great interest, and all over the world the question was discussed and debated.

In order to get something of an authoritative opinion, *The New York Times* asked a jury of six Americans, three Englishmen, two Frenchmen, one German, one Italian, one Spaniard and one Swede to make an impartial choice. The result of their vote was the following: "Homer, Plato, Virgil, Dante, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Moliere, Milton, Voltaire, Goethe, Balzac and Dickens. Two American writers received votes—Edgar Allan Poe and Walt Whitman—but not enough to elect them."

In 1887, *The Pall Mall Gazette* published a popular vote on the ten great masters of fiction, and the result in order was, "Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, George Eliot, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Victor Hugo, Bulwer Lytton, J. Fenimore Cooper, Johann W. Goethe and Alexander Dumas."

July, 1885, *The Queries,* published at Buffalo, put out a question to the literary world, as to what might be the ten great books of the world. The test had to do with fiction only, and the reply was, *The Scarlet Letter,* (Hawthorne); *Les Miserables,* (Hugo); *Romola,* (Eliot); "*Adam Bede,* (Eliot); *Ivanhoe,* (Scott); *David Copperfield,* (Dickens); *Henry Esmond,* (Thackeray); *William Meister,* (Goethe); *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* (Stowe); and *On the Heights,* (Auerbach). It should be noticed that these are named, in order, according to the highest votes.

Another paper, later on, gave this interesting book news: "Best historical novel, *Ivanhoe;* finest humorous novel, *Pickwick Papers;* best novel with a purpose, *Never Too Late to Mend;* best sensational novel, *Woman in White;* best novel of all, *Vanity Fair.*"

To-day, a vote on these matters would bring some change. What, we cannot tell. There is a mass of literature, to-day, which bewilders one. Much of it is of poor quality. We might stand before the books as Bunyan's Pilgrim stood, before the Slough of Despond, crying, "What shall I do?" The necessity of careful selection is upon us for time is too precious to waste upon poor material. "Good books are mental machines, enabling the mind of man to reap in many harvest fields and multiply the mental treasure."

"Books are storehouses into which facts and principles have been harvested. They can supplement experience and give the information that makes man ready against his day of battle. Knowledge stands in as vital relation to the growth of reason as iron and phosphate to the enrichment of the blood. Books enable us to visit climes, cities, to get the wisdom of seers, statesmen and to know the thoughts of the wise who have left their impress upon the world. We need to seek authors and books who will teach us to see and to know."

So much did Charles Lamb think of books, that he suggested that men should say grace over a table spread with good books. For man has no truer friends than good books.

When Robert Southey grew old and dim of vision, he would totter into his library, and pass from shelf to shelf laying his hand upon one favourite book after another. A rare smile passed over his face, just as we lay our hand tenderly upon the shoulder of some dear friend. Through their books, his old friends came to him again and talked to him. Before he died, Southey said to his books, "Good-night," ere, in that bright Beyond, he said to their authors, "Good morning!"

But our question is, "What is the world's greatest book?" It is quickly and easily answered, it is THE BIBLE. It is the world's answer and has a vote that presents no doubt as to its answer. No other book has stood in such vital relations to civilization and man's mind and heart, as the Bible. Analysing the traits of the English race, Emerson said, "that the ruling classes have their strength and culture through having been nourished daily upon a chapter in the Bible."

In Stratford-on-Avon, stands a great building in which books written about Shakespeare, or his plays, are gathered. It is of great interest to the traveller and scholar. It is said that the building has about seventeen thousand books. If all the books which have been written as a result of Bible study were gathered together, there would be no building yet constructed that could contain them.

The press pours forth an ever-increasing stream of books. We have become a nation of readers. We not only read for instruction but for amusement, for stimulus, for information, for consolation and for the sharpening of our minds. But still the stream of the Bible is greater than all others combined. Why? Because it is the spring of thought and inspiration, as no other book. "This book lent Milton his *Paradise Lost;* gave Handel his *Messiah;* inspired Titian's *Descent from the Cross;* sent Cromwell out to fight for liberty; whispered to Lincoln his *Golden Rule* and gave to Tennyson his *In Memoriam.* This has been the book for all prodigals; it has been a medicine chest for the sick; a balm of consolation for the sorrowing; and a heaven for the dying."

In his book, *A Layman's Bible,* Francis Bowen, a professor in Harvard says, "It is not too much to say that the books of the Old and New Testament have exerted more influence on the course of human affairs, among civilized nations, than all other books put together. Their imprint is on most of the literature, the philosophy, the legislation and the history of the past several hundred years."

Woodrow Wilson said, when President of the United

States, "There are a good many problems before the American people to-day, and before me as President, but I expect to find the solution of those problems just in the proportion that I am faithful in the study of the Word of God."

The World's greatest book is the Bible, because it has God behind it as its Author. Henry Rogers in *The Superhuman Origin of the Bible Inferred From Itself,* argues that the study of the Bible shows how impossible it is to account for its existence by referring it to purely human sources. The main proposition of his argument is tersely expressed in one sentence, "The Bible is not such a book as man could have made if he would, or would have made if he could."

The best way to defend the Bible, is to produce the book itself; show what it is, what it teaches, what it has done, and what it is doing in the world to-day. Is it too much to say that the Bible is proved to be the Bible of God when it can be shown to be not the word of man. Between man's picture of himself and the picture of this Book there is a great gulf, as far as the East is from the West, or the heavens from the earth. If the picture in the Bible was not inspired by man it surely could not have been inspired by the evil one. Therefore, the conclusion would be that the picture was inspired by God.

Salmon P. Chase, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States has said: "There came a time in my life when I doubted the divinity of the scriptures, and I resolved as a lawyer and judge I would try the book as I would try anything in the courtroom, taking evidence for and against it. After a long and serious

and profound study, and applying the same principles of evidence in this religious matter as I always do in secular matters I have come to the decision that the Bible is a SUPERNATURAL BOOK, that it has come from God and that the only safety for the human race is to follow its teachings."

"Man's soul is God's breath, man is God breathing; God breathes in and through man. The Bible is God-breathed and God breathing. It contains the thoughts of God. It transmits the thoughts of God to the mind and heart of man. The Bible teaches, reproves, corrects, instructs, and the end of all this is a soul saved, equipped for service, furnished unto all good works."

The Bible is a picture-gallery. We have the portrait of man as he was in the image of God, and as he became through the blighting power of sin. Here is the story of Jesus, and His revelation of the Father; the story of man's redemption and how he became good and went out to bring others to Christ; the story and growth of the Church; the story of the working of the Spirit of God, on the hearts and minds of young men, who saw visions, and of old men who dreamed dreams.

And we have in the Bible, a picture of the evil forces that ruin our race. Here is the portrait of Satan himself —cunning, deceptive and malicious. And here is a picture of every sin we are called upon to shun. The Bible presents the best morals, the best Teacher, the best ending of life, and the best rewards for those who follow its precepts.

The Bible is the world's greatest Book, because of its supreme spiritual value. There are not many supreme moral teachers. To me, there is only one, and that is

Jesus Christ. Why is Jesus far greater than Confucius? The teaching of the latter is not religious; it does not deal with God. It is a deification of the spirits of ancestors, and any human soul that has any moral sagacity or intellectual insight, must see that ancestors do not need to be deified. They are not fit for it. They are too copious in failure, and too munificent in unrighteousness.

Buddha gives us only practical atheism. His teachings being actual materialism, have no God, no future for man nor voice for immortality, seeing God is nowhere.

Mohammed took the Holy Scriptures, slashed them as he would, and gave the world a book of fatalism that destroys moralities.

"The Vedas of the Hindus, the writings of Confucius, the sacred writings of the Buddhists, and the mythological writings of the ancient Greeks, all had some value in their time and to the lands in which they originated; but it is strangely true that the little country of Palestine, to-day resting under the bane of the Turkish Empire, with nothing of interest in it but the spots made sacred by the Saviour's feet, produced the greatest literature the world has ever seen or will see! In the last 2,000 years there has not lived a man who could write a piece of literature like the Twenty-third Psalm, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, the seventeenth chapter of John. You can take Shakespeare, the foremost of the English poets, or Emerson, America's foremost philosopher, and their best work is eclipsed by a single parable of Jesus—the Parable of the Prodigal Son." These men reached great moral heights now and then, but Jesus never leaves

them. The Sermon on the Mount, the parables of the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son, and Jesus' words of love to the sinful and needy, show the supremacy of the spiritual in the Bible.

The Bible is the world's greatest Book, because it gives the best interpretation of life. "It is a long voyage that the soul makes in the journey from the cradle to the grave. And the traveller needs some chart or map showing him the dangers; some guide pointing out the path through the world and the track across that which is unknown. The soul needs a teacher who will tell him about himself, and what he is here for, and how to make the most of life and time."

The Bible sets forth that man is a child of God; that he comes here to do His will, and to help others to be true, and win the disobedient to righteousness, and to point out that man cannot prosper unless he is at-one-ment with truth and goodness. The Bible goes on to illustrate these facts by the career of man. "The Old Testament is a kind of a stage on which every type of character and destiny in right or wrong is played out for the warning and the reproof of the beholders. Avarice is portrayed by Jacob, with the inevitable retribution upon the covetousness that dehumanizes the soul. The folly of pleasure and passion is illustrated in Esau, who sells his soul for a feast, and trades gems for paste and clay. Jealousy is illustrated in the eleven brothers, and fidelity is rewarded in the enthronement of Joseph. The superficial man who lives to the eye and the ear and the sense is capitalized by Reuben, who seemed a cake half-baked. Then Solomon goes upon the stage—Solomon, whose genius must be likened to a

golden palace, with a rich library standing for the king's culture, and a glorious picture gallery, standing for his imagination, but who is a palace looted of its marbles and laces and pictures and filled with things that creep and crawl. Then comes David, whose songs have stirred the world, but who becomes an outcast, a hiding place of one of the sins of all sins, and yet turns to God and is forgiven, bringing hope to the world of sin, as no other character on the stage of action. Every temperament, every profession, every motive is portrayed in letters of light."

"The New Testament is a book of character studies, far surpassing Plutarch, Shakespeare, Emerson in his *English Traits,* and Carlyle in his *Heroes or Demons.* We enjoy reading many of the books of the old school of writers; *Ivanhoe, Oliver Twist, Romola, Les Miserables* and *The Scarlet Letter.* What characters they had! In modern times, we have *Beau Geste, Main Street, Pere Gariot* and *Shoddy.* None of them other than fictitious, but built upon something of a background of interpreted human life. But how true the New Testament! It records the deeds of its people whether they be good or bad, without fear, and without explanation or qualification. Peter with his perfidy—Peter with his confession of sin and his recovery to righteousness, all are seen."

"Here is a book that as far exceeds the combined efforts of man, as the sun exceeds the brilliancy and life-giving power of modern electric lights, which are but babes in their power and effects." Here is the book that tells me of my origin and my destiny; my sonship to a great Father, and the part He would like to have me

play in this world as His representative. It shows me how to conquer and win the crown of my Father's approval.

The Bible is the world's greatest Book, because it not only shows man his disease but his cure. In the hour of peril, sickness and adversity, men have gone to the Bible, seeking a torch for the dark night; seeking medicine for the wounds made in the struggle; seeking a guide to lead them out of the labyrinth of ways.

When the early settlers came to the Northwest, they asked an Indian girl, Sacajawea, to guide them through forests, rivers and over mountains to the great Coast with its marvellous opportunities. And man entering an unknown realm needs a guide book as he seeks to carry himself across the continent of years to the shores of the infinite sea and the land of rest.

When some manufacturer forwards you an intricate mechanism he sends with it a book of directions. The words and pictures of the one answer to the wheels and works of the other. He who rejects the book, still has the machine on his hands to account for and use. No man adds to his responsibility by accepting the Bible, nor can any man lessen his responsibility by rejecting it. Responsibility is based upon what God organized into our being when we laid in the cradle. Jean Valjean said, "There is one Bible that each man carries with him everywhere, and daily he must read its pages written in fire. This is conscience."

It is evident that the world is sick in its moralities. Proposed remedies are being discussed everywhere. "At the basis of them all is the recognition that there is some radical disability in human life showing itself

in the organization of society. The greater number of prescriptions given to-day move in the wrong way. They move in regulation. Jesus went just the other way. He would reform society through correction of the individual. Jesus showed that the disease of the world was in the heart. Men must have a new heart; they must be reborn. Some conquering force from the outside must come upon human nature. The love of God provided the way. It was the cross. On that cross sin was overcome and man through the power of new Christ love would go out to save others and not themselves."

The Bible is the world's greatest Book, because it presents Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind.

An Englishman, Dr. Moorehead, once brought home with him a dissected map of the United States and gave it to his little daughters to play with. "See if you can put it together," he said. The little ones knew nothing of geography, and they were soon discouraged with their efforts. But the map happened to be an advertising map and the enterprising individual who had put it out had put his own picture on the reverse side. As the younger child was giving up and starting away, the older girl called: "Come back, sister, there's a man in it." And with this key to the puzzle the children soon had the map put together.

The Bible is like that map, "There's a Man in it." His presence is felt very early in the narrative, and, later on, He dominates it. The Bible has only one key, and that key is Jesus Christ. Without Him, the Bible is like a harp without a player; a schoolhouse without a teacher. The lock and the key are made for each other.

Jesus said of the Scriptures, "They are they which

testify of me." Few things are more interesting and none more profitable, than tracing the Messianic idea through the Bible. It begins with the curse upon the serpent in *Genesis,* and closes with "the Lamb as it had been slain in the midst of the throne" in *Revelation.* In Christian character the image of Christ is marred by imperfections, if not by sins. But in the Scriptures the portrait is perfect. I have read of a painting which hung on the wall of a home. When you first saw it, it was a beautiful landscape, with trees, streams, houses and people, but, while gazing at it, all these beautiful things began to form into a human face. On a closer inspection you perceive the whole picture was intended to give the face of Christ. The devout student of the Scriptures is constantly having experiences like this. He sees much in the Scriptures that are beautiful, inspiring, but they are all so arranged in their relation to Christ as to bring out all the features of His character.

The Bible is the world's greatest Book, because its program meets every condition in one's life. We live in times of change, upheaval, disquiet, of unending criticism of creeds, churches and teachings. The authorship of the Bible, the current theories of inspiration, the trustworthiness of the pulpit and college, the evolution of man, the future life, the biological setting of the hour, all are having their effect on the program of life.

The world's program presses us for bread, social standing and pleasure. We are to get a competence first. Magazines and papers, by the million, are telling us how to earn more dollars per day, how to speak well, and to build up our business. Pleasure looks upon us with a

thousand eyes of invitation and madly are people chasing it to get the rainbow just over the hill.

The Bible has an altogether different view of life. Man's first business is to get himself right with God. When we adjust ourselves to the principles of right living we have for the first time laid the foundation of happiness. Then, we are told that life does not consist in possessions. Money and comforts do not bring peace. For money men are fighting, killing and enslaving, making war, smashing treaties, adulterating goods and breaking up homes. Life is purity of purpose, of unsullied character, a matter of true fellowship one with another, and void of offense.

The program of the Bible demands that I be not a pensioner of society but render the community some service worthwhile. All that is ours is a trust to be administered to the service of God and man. God decrees that every man to whom He has prescribed a task upon earth shall live to the last hour occupied by the task; and God's decrees admit of no defeat through lack of ways and means for their accomplishment. The same word that commissions a general to lead forth a regiment through the wilderness, comes to us to move forward in the campaign of God to save the world.

As the iron ore in the hills is the raw material out of which we shape all tools, all machinery, all buildings, and all ships; so the Bible is the raw material out of which we shape all of our ethical systems, all our laws of government, all our courts of justice, all our moral teachings for school, business and commerce. Whatever is taken out of that Book will endure; whatever

is mere imitation of that Book, will sometime be flung to the rubbish heap of the universe.

The Bible is the world's greatest Book, because it points out and gives much light on the future of man. The chemists have dreamed out a paradise. It is to be the synthetic heaven with synthetic food, drink, clothes and homes. If people go to war it will be a synthetic warfare with the victory not to the biggest army but to the most destructive chemicals.

Factory food will take the place of the garden product. Thirty men will produce what one thousand men do now, from fifty-seven thousand acres. The cow will be passé Children will drink synthetic milk. There will be no more beefsteaks, the recent National Chemists' Convention tells us. Instead, a yeast product will take the place of the lordly round of beef.

The Sahara desert will be drawn upon for a plant that takes unexampled amounts of energy from the sun. Shale, sawdust, oil and coal will produce the fats and the sugars. Vitamins will be produced artificially and these the chemists will in turn employ to control the size and influence the complexion of human beings.

Cornstalks, sawdust and other forms of waste will be fabricated into clothing. The steel and concrete walls of homes will both be synthetic, capable of being washed down by a hose.

Nothing is said about synthetic water, but that probably will be produced along with synthetic fishing, golfing, game hunting and baseball playing. And if out of this chemical paradise also emerges synthetic future life what a wonderful thing it all will be!

Well, the Bible gives us this synthetic future life.

It does not give a "perhaps," but a positive assurance of such a life.

A few years ago, calculations by astronomers determined that, at a certain point in the heavens, there ought to be a star, although there was no telescope strong enough to discover it. But long after that, a very strong instrument was invented, and when it was placed in position it was turned in the direction where the star should be, and there it was, glimmering brightly in the far-off space. When we think that, somewhere, provision has been made for our infinite longings, and we take the Bible, the telescope of the soul, and put it to the eye of faith, we find heaven, with all its joys and blessings awaiting us with its wonderful unfoldings.

It is related in *Pilgrim's Progress,* that Christian was met at the foot of the Cross by three angels, who presented him with a name, a white garment and a Roll with a seal upon it. He found much comfort in reading from this Roll until, coming to a pleasant arbour, he fell into a slumber and lost it. As he continued his journey, meeting with many dangers, he felt in his bosom for his Roll, "that he might read therein and be comforted;" and he found it not. Then was he in great distress, for he wanted that which used to relieve him and which should have been his pass into the Celestial City. At last he bethought himself of the arbour wherein he had slept, and asking God's forgiveness for that foolish act, he went back to look for his Roll, all the way crying, "Oh, that I had not slept!" But coming to the arbour he espied his Roll, the which with trembling he caught up and put into his bosom. And who can

tell how joyful this man was when he had gotten his Roll again, for this was the assurance of his life!

To have the Bible, is to have the sun in the garden of the mind, vitalizing and bringing up to fruitage for God and mankind. It is like the reservoir to the city, refreshing and saving life. The Bible is here to give strength to conviction, charity to thought, and illumination to the path in which we must walk. It gives us our God as Father, our Master as Saviour and Exempler, the Holy Spirit as Comforter and Guide.

The Bible does not always say what we would like it to say, but what is true and best for us. Many call this an age of transition; some call it the age of fermentation, but it can be, through the Bible, the age of germination into new forces, new experiences and new consecrations.

Get back to your Bible, O Christian! Take it from the shelf and table, where perhaps it lies covered with dust. Other books help and quicken, but here is the Book that trains in righteousness and leads to God and the Celestial City!

XIII

THE WORLD'S GREATEST INSTITUTION: THE CHURCH

"And upon this rock, I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—MATT. 16:18

THERE are many institutions in the world. Some of these are fraternal, some are social, some educational, some political and some religious. A little while ago, I read that there are three million and more Masons in the United States, and that "they could control the political power of this country." There is no doubt but what great commercial and political power is to be found in the fraternal organizations of our land. But these organizations do not constitute the world's greatest institution.

Political organizations seemingly are at the front of interest and power in our land, and we do not doubt their influence and force upon the people and interests of our country.

The educational institutions with their many students running into millions, is an organization of tremendous power and grips the life of the nation in many forceful ways, but it is not the greatest institution.

The world's greatest institution is the Church of Jesus Christ. This will be challenged in the thought of some men and women who may read these lines. They will

say, "There was a time when the Church was the dominating educational, religious and political force of the world. But to-day many new institutions are here that have narrowed the sphere in which the Church moves and acts. The press wields a greater influence in some ways, and fraternal organizations are attracting the men more than churches. Educational institutions have taken from the Church some of her teachings, and these and other changes have greatly restricted the church in her position in the world."

We admit some of these statements, but have these changes been detrimental to the Church? The Church has been the fallible and imperfect instrument of religion. It has often emphasized form, not spirit; to preserve precedents and not ideals. In estimating the power and influence of the Church we must distinguish between institutions and ideal religion; between religion as a form and religion as a spirit; between the motive forces of religion and the machinery through which it has been expressed.

If we ask what are the needs of society, to-day, we must answer, not for more comforts, more wealth, more education, but more invigoration of moral ideals, a new and better conception of spiritual wealth and the making of the brotherhood of man.

Where will these come from? Not from the press, not from the college, not from our fraternal organizations but from the Church. It stands for all and makes one in Christ Jesus.

What is the Church? The theologian defines it in terms of doctrine; the moralist in terms of ethics; the churchman in terms of ritual; the Romanist in terms

of government; the reformer in terms of sociology. There may be some truth in each one of these definitions, but all of them combined do not give us a full-orbed definition of the Church. But the New Testament does. According to Paul, the Christian Church "is the body of Christ." It is not a mechanism but an organism, in which Christ is the animating spirit and the vital life.

According to the New Testament the Church is not a human institution. It is divine in its foundations, in its purpose and in its power. The Church belongs to Christ, not to any man or to any class of men. He purchased it, "With his own precious blood." The Christian Church is not a body of either priests or preachers, employers or employees, capitalists or labourers. It is the body of Christ, the channel through which He conveys His Spirit to the world, and the instrument through which He carries on His work among men. Because IT IS DIVINE IT IS THE WORLD'S GREATEST INSTITUTION.

We have respect for many human institutions, because of their good works in helping a part of mankind. But we reverence the Church of Jesus Christ because it not only carries on in particular Christ's salvation and reformation to all mankind, but plays the part of the Good Samaritan to all classes whether of their order or not.

Look out upon the world of to-day. Take the measure of the men and women whom you meet. Watch their conduct. Note the things that interest and absorb them; the things they go to see and spend their money for, and if you frame a judgment at all, it must be that

the great spiritual realities of life are discounted and forsaken to a great degree by the masses. There is a wide-spread and demoralizing indifference to the standards of morality and religion. Men in crowds have gathered round the golden calf and have trampled upon the tables of the law and forgotten the duties of God and man.

There is a spirit of lawlessness abroad. It is everywhere. Riots in the North and mobs in the South; bombing in the West and murders in the East—all are expressions of the same unruly spirit. Lobbyists at Washington, lawyers trying to break statutes; Christians breaking nearly all of the commandments; courts full of disrepute, speak of a waning sense of justice and lack of authority in every form. There is no doubt but what the Church is needed, to-day, to keep God in men's lives, to tone up the community, the market place and to remind all that God is still on His throne and that His government still lives.

"Man is a question, the Church has the answer; man is an enigma, the Church is his solution; man is a sinner, the Church has his salvation in Jesus Christ; man is a pilgrim, the Church shows the way; man is ignorant, the Church has his needed wisdom; man is going out, the Church shows him his heaven. No other institution does so much."

Why is the Church the world's greatest institution?

Because of its origin. The Church does not appear in the Old Testament. The Church does not appear in the Gospels. God has indeed a special witness on earth, but it was a nation and not a church. Israel is God's witness. Neither did Christ form the Church. He

gathered twelve men about Him, but He never organized them. They had neither constitution, by-laws, president or secretary, only a treasurer, Judas. When Christ went away He left the foundation for the Church of God, but the Church, as such, was not yet. That the disciples believed in His promise, and, in the Upper Room, awaited its fulfillment, is accepted. In the hour of the baptism office, these men and women felt themselves gripped by a power never felt before. In that hour, the Church was born. With the hundred and twenty as a nucleus the Church began her career.

"Alarmed at the progress of the new faith, Judaism marshalled all its forces against it and Rome entered upon a cruel and relentless persecution. But the more martyr-fires were kindled the brighter glowed the witness to the Christ, and in the fifth century after Christ, the company of followers numbered fifteen millions. In the sixth century, Germany was evangelized, in the seventh century, the Scandinavians bowed before the Cross, and in the next century, with Alfred the Great clad in kingly robes, Britain became Christian. In the tenth century, fifty millions of people were called Christians. Now, the story moves rapidly: The battle of Hastings was fought. William the Conqueror comes. Century merges into century. Savonarola plucks the red rose of martyrdom from its exalted heights in Italian history. Martin Luther is born. America is discovered. Calvin stamps his genius upon the thinking of the age. Knox is a voice for God in Scotland, and the number of Christians has grown to over a hundred millions. Now, in this century, we find that the Church with its educational and religious force is fair as the moon,

bright as the sun, terrible as an army with banners, five hundred millions strong."

The Church, then, is no voluntary association, organized by the will and wish of man. The Church is ordained of Christ, and commissioned by Him to evangelize the world. "The faith once delivered for all," finds its charter in the Word of God. The phrasing of these truths, their statement may change and ought to change with the years, but the truths themselves abide all through the ages. "While the world is hurrying along the highways of time, the Church must not abide in the valleys of criticism and incertitude. We ought to stop our everlasting balance of evidence, with the gratuitous airing of doubts, as though that were an intellectual and moral virtue, and proceed to proclaim the truth of Jesus Christ as a Saviour from sin." Men and women want to know they can be forgiven.

"Every building stands for something. The home stands for the joy and comfort of the family. The school stands for the education of the child. The courthouse stands for justice, if rightly executed. The store stands for trade and the shop for manufacture. The Church stands for God, through Jesus Christ, as a place for saving and helping mankind."

The Church is the world's greatest institution, because of its membership. This includes every truly regenerate soul on this earth, utterly irrespective of names or divisions. Denominations may be necessary in our present state, but they are among the little systems that have their day and cease to be. The real Church is that organized and unorganized body of souls who have felt the quickening touch of God's grace.

It is perfectly possible for the individual man or woman to have the deepest loyalty to his, or her own local church or denomination, and at the same time to say with Loyola, "I belong to the order of all saints, and all the saints are of my order." As all the oceans constitute but one body of water, so the children of God of all names and climes constitute the universal Church which is the object of God's special care.

"The best way to put our whole broad country under thorough cultivation is for each farmer to thoroughly cultivate his own patch. He must not envy his neighbours, or hate them, or quarrel with them, but let them do their work and he do his."

A man can best help the universal Church by putting all his energies into some particular branch of it, and and into some local church organization. Our voices are not loud enough to reach the ends of the earth; our influence is not great enough to be felt everywhere; we must do our work within the compass of our means and personalities.

The Church is the world's greatest institution, because of its errand. What is this errand?

First, it is to present Jesus Christ to the world. The Church has no existence apart from Christ, and has no position or power, save in the fellowship with Him. Jesus Christ was the founder of the Church. She is in no sense the product of Hebrew piety or polity. Judaism waged the first warfare against the Church. She is not the outgrowth of Grecian life and thought, not a development of Roman life. The Grecians despised the Church and the Romans persecuted it. The Church is the direct and immediate creation of Christ.

Having created the Church by imparting His life to believers, Christ controls and empowers it by abiding in it through His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the dynamic of the Church. Her power is not in her scholarship, noble as that is; nor in her numbers and resources, potent as these may be; nor in her organizations, necessary as these may be, but in her vital relationship with the unseen presence and energizing power of the Spirit.

The tide of the masses for hundreds of years set full toward the Church until within the last few years. Now the tide is ebbing and its reflux is disturbing. The attitude of millions of people, to-day, towards the Church, is that of forbearance, indifference and in many places, there is avowed hostility. At the same time the attitude of most of these toward Christ is that of respect and admiration. The Founder is extolled, the thing founded is regarded as negligible. Why? The Church is conceived by these, to have parted company with the spirit and purpose of Christ, her King, and to be more concerned with orders, ritual and new developments of science. Some feel that the Church is the friend of wealth and distinction, and is therefore cold and haughty to the poor and ignorant. They feel that the ministry is not sure of its own belief and are divided as to what constitutes truth and essentials. These claim that there is time-serving, expediency and worldliness in the Church, and so she is not lifting up her Master and Lord.

The finest service that the Church can render this age, is once more to lift up Christ as King and Saviour,

and be loyal to His commission and constrained to His purpose and salvation. If this be done, the Church once more will take command of matters and move the masses toward her door.

Second, the Church is the world's greatest institution, because it magnifies the spiritual, and points men to the source whereby they can be saved from their sins.

The great thing in primitive Christianity and the essential thing in modern Christianity is the work done on Calvary. "The pierced hands are no myth, the broken heart is no accident, the substitutionary death is no theory, the open tomb is no fancy, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, His ascension and the coming of His Spirit, are no superstitious ideas, but facts that the ministry and Church should still give the world."

The supreme mission of the Church is to set forth the great fact of the sacrifice of the Son of God, for the redemption of man. Emerson dreamed of a church founded on moral science, but the dream is further away, to-day, than ever. Men have realized the fact, that God in Christ Jesus, forgives sin, and this is to be the truth of all ages. To-day, the attempt is to emphasize the Gospel of the life of Christ, but "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" And hearing that rebuke we know that He is not simply a LEADER to be admired or followed, but a SAVIOUR who forgives men their sins through His Father. We must preach not simply that Christ died, but that He is alive, demanding our allegiance and loyalty, as in the days of His flesh.

"Christianity is the religion of a Person. A woman

who was not a believer said to an earnest Christian: 'You have something I lack,' to which he replied, 'Not something, but Someone.'"

Third, the Church is the world's greatest institution, because there is committed to her a social service and order not given to any other. Jesus began His ministry by arraigning the social and ethical standards of His day, and by inspiring men to live above them. The Church is the hand of Christ, thrust out to humanity. It does not exist for the sake of its own members. It exists for the world that may never have entered its doors, and heard as yet nothing of its teachings.

"Alexander Selkirk on his lonely island could not be the best kind of a Christian. He could, of course, pray to God and be saved in the life to come. But to be a real Christian is something deeper than to pray to God and be saved in the hereafter." "The theory that the Church is an ark of safety for those who are lucky, opposes the truth that it is a 'lifeboat' for the rescue of the needy. One says, 'save me'; the other says, 'save all.' One thinks of the insiders, the other of the outsiders. The best boat is that which has the most speed and the most room. The most orthodox church is that which saves the most men. The only apostolic succession is an apostolic success. The ideal society of Christ is not a social club but a life-saving station, and every member one of the crew. When the night is black, and the winds are out, and the rockets go up, and only a life-boat can breast the waves, it is 'steady' and 'all together'—a short creed and a stout heart and a strong arm! Christ is in the boat already. He is at the helm and tiller; He is the 'Captain of

salvation.' It cannot sink; it carries a greater than Cæsar."

There have been four great pictures of the ideal society that the world will always remember. Plato's ideal commonwealth was where all the magistrates were to be philosophers, and all the philosophers magistrates; where the citizen was trained only for the state, and where justice was always to be done.

Augustine painted his picture in the City of God, rising on the ruins of the Roman empire, yet coming down out of heaven from God; a Church rather than a state, where the rulers were to be ecclesiastics, where the only law was to be the law of God. That has passed away, except as a literary curiosity.

Dante's dream was a church and state, organically united, ruling the destinies of men in both spheres, a dream never realized on the earth.

Then came Sir Thomas More, with his *Utopia*—the Land of Nowhere—in which diamonds were used by the children for playthings, and gold and silver for the fetters of criminals; where every man was to retire at the age of forty-five, and want and hunger and misery were to be unknown. This was Utopia.

Jesus has His social ideas reflected in the Sermon on the Mount, the parable of the Good Samaritan, the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and the spirit of love which pervades the Epistles of John. This ideal can win.

The message of Christianity is not that all men are born equal. "Equality of capacity, attainment or reward is, and was divinely intended to be, forever impossible." "All ye are brethren," said Jesus, but

brothers are not duplicates. If they were, the glory and beauty of the family life would at once disappear. But all are to be brethren.

"A church for one section of society only, is a mutilated limb, and not the body of Christ. A church for the poor only, is precisely as bad as a church for the rich only, and both of them are an abomination in the sight of God."

"The Christian Church is sanctified for service. It is not sanctified to gather up her crimson robes around her and shrink away from the sin and the shame of society. She has the only remedy that can heal society. She has the only cure for the pain at the heart. She has the only motive power to run the fellowship clubs, and the unions, and the social organizations of the world. She is the salt that cannot be contaminated but which sweetens and purifies all love and all life. She is the leaven that cannot be changed, but changes all else into nourishment and bread."

If the Church will give herself to the errand of social service in addition to the saving of the soul and exalting Christ, she will find a great hour of opportunity awaiting her. Fill industry with the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of sacrifice and self-denial, and no sphere of human life will afford such splendid opportunities for heroic service. Strikes will cease, lockouts will be unknown, peace will reign in the hearts and homes of all, and war will be no more.

The Church is the world's greatest institution, because there is committed to her the commission of healing the sick. This part of the Church's work is most important at this time, because of the many harmful

cults and wrong teaching along these lines. This commission of healing was given to the Church in the Book of James, where we read, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." Most ministers believe this commission is withdrawn. But when and where? Because the Church may not ask the unsaved to be saved, has that commission been withdrawn? No, it is still in the order book, even if not obeyed.

It would seem that the Catholic Church withdrew this commission in her practice in the Middle Ages and substituted oil for "extreme unction," in its place. The Protestant Church has followed the procedure of the Mother Church in this matter.

When the Church is asked, to-day, for proof of its authority, where does it go? To the Church fathers, Augustine, Tertullian, to the ancient manuscripts, Sinaitic, Vatican, to the great scholars, Tischendorf and Tregelles, to the great theologians, Aquinas and Hodge? No, back to Christ! When Christ sent forth His disciples, it was with the command, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers," and *The Book of Acts* is filled with such philanthropy.

To-day, the Protestant Episcopal Church votes to put back into its ritual "That Christian healing has passed beyond the stage of experience, and its values cannot be questioned." Its conclusions are: "That throughout the world spiritual healing is no longer the hope of a few, but the belief and practice of a large and increasing

number of persons. That such healing is an experience of mankind that can no longer be questioned." And it is to be noted that this commission that recommended this healing, was made up in part by three great physicians in this country, Dr. Charles Mayo, Rochester, Minn., Dr. Howard Johnson, San Francisco, and Dr. Sinclair Bowen, Washington, D. C.

You have exactly the same reason for expecting to be healed that you have for expecting to be saved. YOU HAVE GOD'S WORD FOR IT. The Church should proclaim that Jesus is a Saviour from sin. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness;" "by whose stripes we are healed." And the Bible says, "He is the Saviour of the body." Under the truth of the Word, one can reckon himself dead unto sin and disease and alive unto God and health.

The Church is the world's greatest institution, "because of her destiny. That destiny is the Church triumphant. Here is the institution that goes on forever and ever. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude . . . saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his wife [Church] hath made herself ready." To belong to the Church is the greatest honour that can come to a man in this world. If he belongs to other institutions, and has failed here, he has missed the supreme opportunity of a lifetime. To be a part of the Church Triumphant is to be a part of the wonder of the world. To see the vision of it through the eyes of the Bible, is to lay down one's life for it. To see its service as it is ours to see it, is to receive a call into

its fellowship. To live with it, is to find the glory of its power and honour in the heavenly life.

There are some weaknesses in the world's greatest institution. The Church is not manifesting enough faith in herself. Because of this, she is wanting in aggressiveness. There is too much hesitancy, too much doubt, too much uncertainty in the Church, to-day. There is a period of transition on, because of new discoveries and new visions of truth. But these should not affect our positive note, our faith in Jesus Christ. Our ministry should not deplete Jesus Christ nor his salvation.

There is a chilling weakness among some members of the Church because of the biological, scientific investigations of the day. Anything that cannot be weighed in the balance of reason, and laid bare by the scalpel, is doubted. But there are biological, scientific men who believe in Christianity and its great doctrines. We can choose which class we will follow. History shows that we can never win men by a tepid faith, but by an earnest Gospel. The need of the hour is not a flabby, spineless Church, not a weak, vacillating ministry, nor worldly teachers, but a faith-*full*, faith-enriched Church, ministry and teachers.

The Church, to-day, is wanting in blameless, holy living. The distinction between the Church and the world is fast receding and reaching the vanishing point. "Too much of the Christian life of to-day is honeycombed with worldly indulgences and compromises, so that all that is left of it, is a thin outer shell of religious formality." "Many a church can be described as passionless, without emotion, having no enthusiasm, no fire, or spiritual glow. The most that can be said of some

is; 'it is faultily faultless, icily regular, and splendidly nil.' "

I bespeak for the Church a just appreciation of her work. She is engaged in the greatest business of life. Too often, the life is given to the trivial affairs. Too often the Church finances are planned on the penny scale. Too often churchmen cheapen the Church by petty administration. "There are nickel and dime theatres and places of amusement, to-day, but you would be ashamed to be seen entering most of them. Nickelizing the Church cheapens it in the eyes of men. We should write 'Amplius' (wider) over all church life and work. The Church is the fount of God from which flow the streams that better and brighten human life. The Church has a right to be the best thought and strongest effort of men."

I ask for loyalty to the Church. We have come to a time of criticism and slander in connection with the Church. Investigate all you please this institution of God, but do not dare to discount what God hath instituted and given to the world. Magazines, papers and speakers, charge the Church with inefficiency, and with being lacking in scientific spirit. But, despite all these things, the Church is on the side of righteousness, goodness, and has done more for the world than all other forces put together. As members of the Church, let us not cheapen ourselves by cheapening the Church of our Master. "Better than billboard or bulletin, better than the press or any music or eloquent preaching as an advertisement of the Church is the consistent, clean life of the Church members. When the light of the knowl-

edge of the glory of God shines out in the lives of God's people, the world will turn to the Church."

In a book called, *The Way of Peace,* Dr. Burroughs, tells of a boy in the public school who was playing Rugby football in one of the great matches of the season. He was keen for the honour of his school. When the contest was at its height and he was running with the ball, he was tackled and thrown by an opponent. In the melee which came his leg was broken. Not knowing what had happened his opponent held on the broken leg. The boy still in possession of the ball, and in spite of his injury, wiggled along the ground on his elbows, and got the ball over the line for a touchdown. The injured leg was pulled right out of its setting by the grip of the other fellow upon it, and the hero had to go straight to the hospital. It was a bad case, and the father was sent for. He came, heard the story and going to his son's bedside, was proud at heart but pretended severity.

"Well, young man, what do you mean by doing this sort of thing?" he began. The boy looked up and answered: "I couldn't help it, Father, we were two points down."

To-day, the Church is two points down, and is in danger. What is to be done? Every member should be like the lad, in his place and work for its success. If the human will supplement the Divine, victory is assured.

XIV

THE WORLD'S GREATEST MASQUERADE: PRETENSION

"Why feignest thyself to be another?"—I KINGS 14:6

THE story of *The Man with the Iron Mask*, tells of a famous personage who was kept a prisoner in French prisons and buildings during the reign of Louis the Fourteenth. He was taken from one place to another, and always kept masked. He was not permitted to take off his mask even in the presence of his physician. In other respects, the greatest attention was given him. His education was carefully attended to, and he amused himself in reading and playing on his guitar. This unknown person died Nov. 19, 1703 and was buried the next day in the cemetery of St. Paul. Conjecture exhausted itself to discover who this mysterious personage might be. Many thought him to be the twin brother of the king, Louis the Fourteenth.

It is evident that this man was compelled to mask himself by some one high in authority. It may have been that it was the only way in which he was permitted to live his life in this world.

Our text gives us another kind of a masquerade—of one who adopted such an attitude, in order to deceive another. A queen, disguised in the humble garb of a peasant, a basket on her arm, goes trudging along, from

her palace at Tirzah up to the house of the prophet Ahijah. The queen is the wife of king Jeroboam, "the son Nebat who made Israel to sin." There is trouble in the palace, Abijah, the first-born son and heir to the throne, lies sick, and at the point of death. There is no help except from the God of Israel. The seer Ahijah, has not been in sympathy with the court of the king. He is now blind, and the queen hopes to deceive him, and to secure a blessing for her child. Ahijah hears her coming and recognizes her footstep. "Come in," he cries at her approach; and then he speaks the words: "Why feignest thyself to be another?" Her method did not bring her any help.

MANY PEOPLE ARE PLAYING A PART THESE DAYS. The difference between heaven and earth is that one is a world of substance, reality, while the other is a world of pretence or sham. The poet sings:

> "This world is all a fleeting show, for man's delusion given
> Deceitful shine, deceitful flow, there is nothing true but heaven."

Shakespeare saw this in his day, and declared:

> "All the world's a stage,
> And the men and women merely players:
> They have their exits and their entrances;
> *And one man in his time plays many parts,*
> His acts being seven ages."

There is no playing of parts in nature; every flower is real, each blade of grass is what it appears to be and each bit of woodland, is a talisman of sincerity. God's world is genuine; man's world is a masquerade.

I went into a market a few years ago, and as I waited for the clerk, who was busy, I looked around. On the rack, along the side of the shop, hung some fine-looking hams and pieces of bacon, neatly sewed in canvas bearing the name of a famous brand. For want of something better to do, I put my hand on one of the hams, and, behold! it swung as lightly as a bag. It did not take me long to discover a neatly gotten-up hypocrite, playing a part, all dressed up in real toggery, looking the real article, but stuffed with shavings. And to-day this "playing a part" has been greatly increased, with a few exceptions, in all our stores.

There are human representatives of this art, everywhere, appearing like what they should be, until some one happens to touch their disguise, and lo! they are discovered to be but moral effigies, stuffed with pretentious "excelsior," instead of being real characters filled with righteousness.

It has been said: "We are rarely satisfied to be natural, just ourselves. We are forever 'putting on' in some way or other. There is no virtue that more men believe in and fewer men practise than natural simplicity and unaffected sincerity. Many of us are busily engaged in the utterly futile attempt to run a bluff on the rest of the world." We pretend doing one thing and are intent on doing something quite different.

In our actions we are showing off; trying to make a favourable impression upon the world about us. We are trying to show our importance, our smartness, our dignity, our growing success to those we meet. Some go so far as to brag about themselves, and they quickly give themselves away.

If we meet some one who has really acted a growing part, we may tell them of our power and success. The ignorant affect culture; the unsuccessful success; the poor, riches; the uninvited, social standing. We want others to be duly impressed with our standing and wealth. Oftentimes our "showing off," is called "a perfect scream," and "he was kidding only himself."

"We are playing a part when we balance our sins over against certain virtues. Some of us keep in our mind a debtor and creditor account. Over against the evil in our lives we set certain credit marks. We attend church fairly well; say our prayers once in a while, and, now and then, read our Bible. Therefore we are good. This is an old way of self-deception, playing a part. It is interesting to note how slow men are to accept the truth of religion that God is a righteous God and demands righteousness of His children, and demands nothing else. We do not like to give Him righteousness; we try to square the accounts by giving Him something else. The Pharisee said: "I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all I possess." And to-day man says: "I am kind to my family, patient to my clerks, and thoughtful of others." It is an old trick, this balancing of one thing over against another and thinking ourselves excused from righteousness by something else than righteousness. We wonder that men in the Middle Ages would put money into the coffers of the Church and think that balanced their iniquity. We will have no such system of indulgences as that; but there is many a person, to-day, who lives a life as grasping, as selfish, as covetous, as greedy, as ambitious as the worldling and thinks he balances the account because he goes

to church, says his prayers, or because he has, at times, ideals in which he rejoices. He thinks himself a Christian because he admires Christ; because, sometimes, his heart is filled with emotion as he sings God's love and truth in church. One might as well think himself brave, because the portrait of George Washington hangs upon his walls, as himself holy, because beautiful pictures of holiness sometimes stir his imagination. Such a man is masquerading, pretending, and he cannot get by with it, in the presence of God's word.

We are playing a part when we disguise our vices. We give them false names; we dress them up as virtues and call them such, and really think they are. Here is a man who is living a covetous life and he gets all he can and keeps all he gets, and labels this thrift. And here is a young man who inherits from his father a goodly sum of money and throws it away freely among his fellows, and calls it generosity, and thinks it is. Here is a woman who goes to church and teaches in Sunday school, and gives herself to a man other than her husband, and calls this "soul-mating," when it is only lust in the sight of God and man. Oh, if we could but see ourselves, when the mask is taken away!

Many years ago, the Ravels played in a pantomime. There was one scene in which the whole stage represented a gorgeous ball-room, with pillars of marble and porphyry and precious stones, and rich, rare dresses, and exquisite music, and feasting, and bacchanalian joy; and then, suddenly, at the blast of a trumpet, instantly all was changed; the ball dresses were whisked off, every pillar turned to a gravestone, and every man and woman drinking and dancing to a ghost or a skeleton.

And I have sometimes thought that when that great trumpet sounds and all the disguises of life are taken away, we shall be surprised to find what we were in this masquerade we call life.

Sometimes we are playing masquerade in the pulpit. A system may be true and yet its representative may be false. One of the Twelve was a traitor. Sanctimonious, shrewd, thoughtful, considerate of the poor, the treasurer of the little company, so careful that he was not willing to waste an ounce of ointment on the blessed feet of his Master who was soon to be crowned with thorns; so devoted to his Master that he ran to his embrace, kissed him even in the presence of the soldiers who were sent to arrest him. Yet he was a red-handed hypocrite, a very devil incarnate. So, to-day, God sometimes allows sacred vestments to be laid upon unholy shoulders.

A number of books have come from the press to-day that indicate this masquerading by the clergy. *Elmer Gantry* fails utterly because its central character was just an ordinary criminal, an orgy of the ministry, playing a hideous game that even sinners were disgusted with, seeing in it a caricature of the truth.

Shoddy is different. The unclean, the salacious is not there. There is much of sincerity in it. It is a tale of two young men who begin life together on the farm and in college halls. Each finds his way to his own goal. In Bartelmy the life of a half-sincere personality is revealed shoddiness. He is partially to blame, and is the product of an ecclesiastical system of which he became master and slave. "He achieved the glory of outward power, and the sting of inward defeat."

"Every trade and profession has its empty, colourless leaders and followers. Bona-fede happened to step on to a machine which carried him in to the episcopacy. But you can find his soulless counterpart in law, and politics, business, and society. Many a woman, seeking timid self-expression at a tea or a club or a bridge party, will recognize herself in Viola, the bishopess."

The best part of the book is where the bishop's son Marcus says to his father: "Give 'em religion, father, undiluted religion. They'll thank you; maybe not in words, but in the way they listen. If I may be so bold, talk about Jesus Christ. They'd rather hear about following him than hanging the Kaiser."

I have always believed that no man should preach unless he knows he is called, and he should cease to preach when he is not willing to glorify and lift up Christ as a Saviour, as well as a revealer of God. To-day there is not enough consecration in the pulpit. It has been a place for literary and intellectual display, social position, rather than a place for showing up sin, tearing off hypocrisy, comforting the sorrowing, inspiring to high ideals and above all pointing to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."

Many are masquerading in society to-day. There are many fine, splendid women whose lives are a benediction in service and whose influence goes out to all that is good, and yet are socially interested. I believe in these and I am glad we have them in the church and society. But the gilded, perfumed, painted, beauty-shop thing, ambitious and jealous, now with garments too short one end or the other,—now with garments clinging, now spreading, now with neck and shoulders buried

in furs, and limbs threatening to emerge from the last remains of drapery—this is the woman that is pretending, ofttimes, to be moral and yet often ready for immorality. There is a society worthy of the name, where the best culture, devoutest piety, and noblest types of men and women meet to help and inspire and entertain one another.

We are playing a part as to the sins of the day; and as to the carrying on of God's commandments. We change the form of our sin, and then think we have fixed it. We think that sin consists in the shape it assumes; we do not see that it consists in the evil heart that beats within. We read, "Thou shalt not steal." And yet we strive to get into our neighbour's pocket and take something out without paying an equivalent; and whoever does that violates the spirit if not the letter of the law. We will have no polygamy, but we will have "companionate marriage," divorce laws so easy that a judge shall breathe upon the wedding-ring and it shall be dissolved almost as soon as put upon the finger.

We play a part, when we say, "Yes, I admit this is not quite right, but everybody does it." Or, "I admit this is not quite according to the gospel ideal, but the gospel ideals are not practicable in the twentieth century." We say, "There is no real moral evil, there is no real sin." What men call sin is only good in the making. It is the greenness of an apple that by and by will be ripe. It is the foolishness of a child who by and by will be wiser. The fall is only a fall upward. Let us not trouble ourselves, therefore, but wait. How many men and women would be astounded if they could

put the account of their lives alongside of what Christ expects of them!

And we have lawyers, to-day, who are playing their part. I would not disparage law. It is a great thing to be an adviser, to play the part of an advocate, if done in high integrity. All honour to the lawyer whose logic and learning, whose ability and probity adorn the legal profession. But to-day many a lawyer is a shyster who tears the law to pieces, provokes the witness, preys upon the public like a jackal, observes the law more in the breach than in the observance and uses all his talents for injustice rather than justice, and who sells himself, good or bad, to the highest bidder.

I ought not to say anything against the medical profession, I suppose, for they will get the best of me in the end. And the profession has been a great asset to the world's happiness and prosperity, as well as its life. But there has crept into the profession a class of men who have "preyed" through it upon the people of our land. One time a doctor's bill was in dispute in court and one of the witnesses was asked, "Mr. Smith, don't you really think, sir, that the doctor continued his visits a good while after the patient was out of danger?" "No, sir, I never thought that the patient was out of danger so long as that old humbug was hanging around." The lawyer's mistakes are apt to be exposed by the learned counsel on the other side, but the doctor's mistakes are covered by the clods and by the "ethics of the profession."

Then there is the political masquerading to-day. There are good men in public life, patriots, and statesmen, who love their country and would die for it;

men who will be remembered when they are gone. But I am writing now of the shrewd, cunning, two-faced seeker after the spoils of the political system. A while ago one of these demagogues was addressing an audience and he said: "Fellow citizens, I only wish that I had the wings of the archangel Gabriel and a voice like his, I would fly, I would fly, through the whole wide world and preach the glorious gospel of democracy." Some wag sung out, "You wouldn't have flied a mile, before you would be shot for a turkey-buzzard."

To-day too many politicians are playing a part. The old idea of service and devotion to country is sometimes forgotten, and men think the "part" is a chance to make a place or a fortune. A visit to Washington and to Congress is not destined to give us faith and trust in the men who make our laws. "Playing for position," "trading for sections," and "giving and taking," and "making solid with one's constituency," are the things that weaken confidence in our law makers.

In *Memoirs of Talleyrand,* we read how the great Frenchman, hearing that there was an American general stopping at a little inn, sought him out with a request for letters of introduction to prominent Americans. The story relates that at his request, a look of unutterable despair came into the face of Benedict Arnold, as he replied, "I am perhaps the only living American who can honestly lift his hand to God and say, 'I have not a friend, no, not one, in all America.' "

As Arnold arose to leave the room, Talleyrand, still unaware of his identity, cried out in unrestrained curiosity, "Your name, I pray, your name!" "My name, sir, is Benedict Arnold," he replied, as he quitted the

room. And then it is related that Talleyrand, musing over the incident, cried, "True to your country, what might you have been, oh, Arnold, the traitor!" Well might our political men, think over this story as they play the masquerade of politics!

And there is a pretence in masquerading. We should make way for the real men, who are honest seekers and desire to honour God and mankind. We will find no great fault with the men who have broken with tradition and are searching unknown seas. Truth is truth, and God is truth. That truth I have a right to know. To know the truth perfectly is perfect life. Truth is not a shape of the mind. It exists apart from reason just as the star exists apart from the telescope that studies it. Man does not invent truth or create truth, he discovers it. I am not afraid of real science. The trouble is a sham science, a pretending science. There are preposterous scientific searches bent upon far off conclusions and who do not stop to get their bearings. They take a header now and then and block the road that is being travelled by sensible pilgrims who prefer to go at a safe and steady gait. The trouble is we live in an age of much sham, pretence, "ignorant knowledge," shoddy and hasty conclusions. We can't take time to season the lumber in our buildings, and so the houses we build gap at many a seam, and split at many a corner. We can't take time to eat our food properly and many are dying of undigested food. But God is not a sham; Christ is not pretending, the Spirit is truth, and the soul of man is real.

Napoleon posed, and it was a good pose. "The projected jaw, the bent knee, the hand thrust into the coat

was a great gesture. Napoleon dramatized it—but it failed, June 18, 1815."

Be careful about your pose, your dramatization. There is something about it that is apt to bring comment, excite ridicule, and condemnation from those about you. Some are known as "loud speakers," "posers," "pretenders," even among men. Yes, men are "kidding themselves," in the sight of God and man to-day.

Do not forget THAT GOD SEES THROUGH ALL DISGUISES. "He that formed the eye, can He not see? He that formed the mind, can He not perceive?" These questions were cogent even when they were asked many centuries ago, but how much more so to-day. Herbert Hoover was born, 1874, when there was no radio and no telephone. There was no way whatever of carrying a human voice across any considerable space. The telegraph and the semaphore had been invented for carrying signals, but not the voice. Until the telephone was made practicable, about a year after Mr. Hoover's birth, the farthest any voice could reach was a "whoop" or a "holler," just as much as a strong pair of lungs could do in a favouring wind. But under the new discoveries, many millions heard Mr. Hoover give his acceptance speech.

And if God has an eye, and an ear and a mind, shall He not hear, shall He not see, shall He not understand? It is written of Moses, the man of God, that the Lord spake unto him face to face, "as a man speaketh to his friend." And we also read, that he called unto Adam, "Where art thou?" indicating that he knew his sin and the condition that he was in, from his sin.

"There is sound grain as well as chaff; there are patriots among the betrayers; there are soldiers as well as traitors; there is purity as well as vice; there are religious people as well as hypocrites. It is not always discerned, but in time, all is revealed and judgment comes. Fire cannot long be concealed, it will betray itself with smoke and flame. Sins cannot be long hidden beneath the cloak of profession, they will burn holes in a man's reputation. Sin needs quenching in the Saviour's blood, not concealing under the garb of religion."

"Do you admire us?" said the artificial flower to the bright ray of sunshine which chanced then to come into the room. "I love whatever is true and beautiful," answered the sunshine; "but you are not really what you seem; you have colour without fragrance and form without life; and though you appear of the same family with the flowers of nature, which I love to look on and visit so often, you are but an imitation of the true, and therefore only a show and a sham."

God's Word and historic literature, all, tell us not to pretend, not to cover up, but to be open, true and pure. "If thou hast an angel's tongue and a devil's heart, thou art no better than a post in the cross-way, that rots itself while directing others; or a torch that having pleasured others with the light, goes forth itself in smoke and stench."

"God taught man to make coats to cover his naked body, but the devil taught him to weave deceit to cover his naked soul; yet the more subtle thou art in concealing thy sin, the more thou playest the fool."

Yes, this world is a masquerade and many in it wear

the mask of religion and pretension. People go up and down in it as they did in the days of 'the Parthenon,' and speculate as to this one and that one, sometimes able because of some peculiarity or walk, or speech or action, to perceive, but more often unable to know. But how changed it is, when the unmasking occurs, and the reality is perceived.

There is to be an unmasking some day and we are to be known in the light of God's revealing truth. To be true then, we must shun hypocrisy and never wear a cloak of religion to deceive; we must not be a "wolf in sheep's clothing" and there must not be a disguising in any form or manner. Sincerity must be our pattern of living. "Remember that a vessel of true gold will wear brighter and brighter to the last, when a cup which is only gilt will grow paler and at last all the gilt will be off."

Some one has said, "It is a fearful thing for a man to bind two sins together, when he is not able to bear the load of one. To act wickedness, and then cloak it, is for a man to wound himself, and then go to the spurious one for relief. What man doth conceal, God will not conceal. What a man brings into the open in humble confession, God will forgive."

The Word of God is here to help us. The law we shall be judged by is given to us. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you in the last day." A man that is to be tried for life and death, would like to know how it is to go with him, and how matters shall be carried on beforehand. God will not deal with us by way of surprise; He hath plainly told us according to what rule He will proceed. The sentence on our

state, be it good or evil, is already passed. "He that believeth on him is not judged; but he that believeth not is judged already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." And Paul says, "There is therefore now no judgment to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."

If we bring our sins to Christ and confess them and forsake them, and walk humbly and circumspectly before God, we shall be saved and stand in the truth; the truth that makes free and has nothing but light and honesty in it. The truth is summed up in these words of Thomas a Kempis: "The life of a good religious person ought to be adorned with all virtues; that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seemeth to men."

XV

THE WORLD'S GREATEST HEROES: THE COMMON PEOPLE

"John did no miracle."—JOHN 10:14

WHO would not like to do something great? To go across the ocean in an aeroplane like Colonel Lindbergh and win the world's praise and admiration! Who would not like to write a great book, paint a fine picture, plan a great cathedral, sing like Galli Curci, illuminate like Edison, act like Douglas Fairbanks and make money like John D. Rockefeller, Jr.?

But John the Baptist holds a greater place in the world than any of these and yet he "did no miracle." When all the world was ringing with his fame, he said he was only a voice, borne on the desert air. It was no care to him that he was unable to work a miracle. He who had sent him had not put miracles into the program of his life; and he was perfectly satisfied with the arrangement. To fulfill the task for which he had been qualified and sent was his great aim and ambition.

Such a lesson is for all of us. For many the path in life, the monotony of the commonplace, the life of the uneventful routine, seems to be the predestined lot. But here heroes go on and while unnoticed by man, are seen of God, and they shall have their reward.

Let us think a little about this matter. The heroes of every-day life are about us and are often unnoticed, unsung and hidden from the eyes of the world. We think of heroism as being something connected with great feats of strength, or bravery, or connected with the popular side of knight-errantry. We too often make our heroes charging soldiers, rescuing guards, brave firemen, dazzling movie actresses and money-giving men and women. All these have a glamour over us and rightly sometimes. But this is only a part of the story of heroism.

The greatest struggles of the world have been fought without noise and publicity. In the homes of the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, battles great and masterful have been fought and recorded in heaven that will have the verdict of God's "well done."

Plato has a fable which tells us that the spirits of the other world came back to this one, to find a sphere or place of work. One spirit came and took the body of a poet and did his work. Another took the place of a king and did his work. Then Ulysses came and said: "Why, all the fine bodies are taken, and all the grand work of life selected, there is nothing left for me." And the reply came: "Ah! the best body and work has been left to you." And Ulysses said: "What one is that?" And the reply was: "The body and work of a common man."

This statement and that of our text concerning John takes all out of their insignificance and points out the true glory of life.

"Every smallest hand can lend some kind of helpful touch,
Lift the weight a little, and the many make the much.

Shared feasts are savoury feasts, shared joys are the best,
And the sharers and the shared-with both alike are blest."

John accepted all that came to him and did his best. Thus he made a place for himself. The trouble with the average man is that he does not see the openings of life that may allow him to enter into a divine and more rewarding service.

One time a man with a friend procured a key to a church and tried in vain to unlock the door. He concluded he had the wrong key and sent to the janitor for the right one. When he came he told them that the door was already unlocked. All they had to do was to push, and the door would open. They thought themselves locked out, when there was nothing to hinder them from entering.

In the same way many fail to enter into development and increased ability with God and the world. The door they think is locked against them. They try to fit some key of extraordinary faith and power to open it. They try to get their minds wrought up to some high pitch of feeling. They say they have the wrong key. But all the time the door is ready to open, if they will but push it.

True heroism is doing your duty wherever it may be. Only now and then does a Lindbergh come forth to fame and power, but there are many youth of our land that have the same fine spirit, courage and audacity in them. It would astonish us to know how many every-day heroes God has in this world. Let me name some of them to you.

There is Father and Mother who give themselves in sacrificial love to their children. Heroism is often at the

cradle, rather than on the field of battle. When Jesus wanted to give His disciples an impression of greatness He did not call in a general or a scholar. He placed a child in their midst. The work of rearing a child is so important that God will not trust any one but a mother to do the work. "The launching of a boy and girl to live for Christ is greater than launching a battleship. When God sends us great men and women, He wants them to get the right kind of a start, and so He sees to it that they have a good mother. Being a Congressman or a United States Senator is little work compared to being a mother."

Every child put into a mother's arms is a trust from God and she must answer for it some day. No mother has a right to raise her children for pleasure, but for God and humanity. A bank cashier has no right to rifle the bank and take the savings of the people. And no mother or father have a right to handle their trusts in children save only for heaven and the service of God.

Every child that comes to a father's influence and example must be guided right. "I must do right and be true," says the father, as he toils and plans and gives for his son's welfare and education.

All over this land of ours, thousands of fathers and mothers are sacrificing their health and interests for the sake of giving the children a chance. God sees it and He is writing their names in the fame-book of heaven.

The heroes of every-day life are seen in the men and women who bear patiently their hard lot in life. "Life is not always sailing under fair skies and across tranquil seas until you reach the other side. Life is not a yachting trip to Florida or to the Mediterranean. Life means

roughing it; it means fog-ridden coasts—great hurricanes of impending disasters; it means losing your health, becoming bankrupt, losing all except honour."

The great characters of history have been men of sorrows. See Luther, breaking under the strain of the Reformation, deliriously hurling his ink-well at the devil. Behold John Knox, agonizing in prayer, "O God, give me Scotland, or I die."

Future years will show three great names in American history that reflect the sorrows of great men who broke under the strain of their burdens, Washington, Lincoln, and Wilson. The greatest picture we have of Washington is of him as he kneels in the snow of Valley Forge, bearing on his own heart the cause of the Colonies. And "Lincoln bore the burdens of a disrupted nation, till care chiselled his cheeks into wonderful pathos and sorrow. And Wilson, keen, scintillating, bouyant, dragged his weary way to death, broken by the weight of the world's cares, the power and cruelty of enemies abroad and the still greater load of misunderstanding and misrepresentation of friends at home."

And to-day in many a home, there is an unseen one, broken in body, aged by losses, fighting a battle for recovery. Here goes the struggle unseen by the many, but noticed of God. Some are handicapped by circumstances; others know that they cannot leave those who depend upon them, and thus, they fight on. But God sees it all, and He has His medals of honour to give at the end of the struggle. Many of the heroes of the heavenly life are unnoticed on the earth.

One of the greatest heroes I have ever seen was a woman who had been in bed for a number of years,

gradually turning into stone. For six years she had not been able to turn herself in bed without the assistance of others. As I faced her, the thought came, "What can I say to her that will cheer and help?" But not a complaint, not a murmur! All was sunshine and sweetness in her soul. I discovered that she had been praying for me, although not a member of my church. She had read some of my sermons in the newspapers and they had helped her and she wanted to see me before I left the city, to thank me. When I left I was the one that had gotten the greater blessing. I had caught a gleam of the glory and majesty of a soul, heroic in trust and faith in her Master.

That man is an every-day hero who makes a self-sacrificing spirit his acting principle in life. It is not in war alone that heroes are made. Whittier sang:

> "Dream not helm and harness
> The sign of valour true
> Peace hath higher tests of mankind
> Than battle ever knew."

Years ago, a young man in college, who was seen to possess great abilities and seemingly possessed a great future, received a telegram that his father was dead, and went to the president to bid him good-bye. He said: "Mother is at home, and there are three little children, and they cannot do anything on the farm, I must go home." "Oh!" said the president, "do you love your mother more than you do your God? Don't you remember Him saying, 'He that hateth father and mother for My sake and the Gospels—'" "Stop," said the young man. "It cannot be that; don't you remember

when He was in agony on the Cross He said to John, 'Behold thy mother!' " And the boy went back to the farm and to his mother. He never became a minister, but he ploughed a straight furrow, he did an honest day's work, he paid the debts of the farm and helped his mother rear the three children. He was a sacrificing spirit and did a hero's work.

What great work our teachers are doing to-day! They are doing heroic work. No banker, no politician, no world traveller or social butterfly, is doing the work that the school teacher, hidden away in hard, persistent, teaching is doing for our country's making.

A few years ago I was on board a large ship, sailing away to Alaska. Flags were flying; smoke-stacks lifted their heads to the sky. The masts and ropes and rigging were all in view. The captain's cabin was on the upper deck, and near it was the pilot's wheel to steer the ship. The compass-box was there, where all could see it. But none of these things were making the ship leap through the waters of the ocean. Nor were the sailors, running here and there in their places, or the stewards doing the most important work. Down in the hold of the ship, hidden out of sight, was the source of power.

So it is in our land, to-day. There are multitudes of teachers like the stokers whom only a few see. But they are really doing the work without which our country could not get on. They are laying the foundation of other people's success. We hear of the distinguished author, but not of the clerks who gather his material and collate the facts. We hear of the great manufacturer, but not of the trusty men to whom he owes much of his success. We hear of the great man and woman, but

how few see the teachers who armed with their text books are more potent factors in the world's civilization than the generals armed with their swords. Daniel Webster was wise when in the maturity of his powers he turned aside to pronounce an eulogy on the teacher of his infant years. "Men may not see the teacher's quiet toil, but God and angels do. Some day it will be seen to the astonishment of many. Then it shall be the first shall be last, and the last shall be first. If God has not placed you where you can flame like the lightning, then be like the gravity, which, unobserved, exerts a more subtle and constant power."

That man is a hero who does his work uncomplainingly, with no hope of reward, save the knowledge of duty well done. It is easy to be a hero on the field of battle. But to toil on with no prospect of reward, is heroic.

Much of the glory of the world is in its nameless heroes. The general gets the praise, the common soldier takes the risks and bears the burden. Phillips Brooks said: "If we could draw back the curtain of the millenium and look in, we should not see a Hercules here and there standing on the world wasting monsters he had killed, but a world full of men each with an arm of moderate muscle, but each triumphant over his own little piece of the obstinacy of earth or the ferocity of the brutes."

In Dr. E. E. Hale's *In His Name,* John of Lugio, was a priest of the church at Lyons, who chose to associate with the poor men of the city, instead of remaining with a designing priesthood. Compelled to live in banishment for over five years, because of the perse-

cution of Rome, he came again to Lyons to do kindness to a sufferer he knew. As he was passing along, the remains of the Abbot, St. Ambrose were being carried to their last resting-place. He knew then, that if he had remained faithful to Rome, he would have been his successor, the lord of a lovely estate, the director of all the noble ministries about him. But he had turned away from the rich Abbey of Cormillon and had made himself God's minister in the hovels of Lyons. And now his reward was that this day he hazarded his life by going back to the city to render service, when he might have been safely within the Abbey, the senior of its fraternity. But to John of Lugio the picture brought no regrets. He had chosen as God directed him.

So many a man, as he has taken in the great work of the world, has had new and greater prospects of usefulness to himself flashed before him, and he has saved his better and higher self by the sacrifice of the lesser and the lower.

Look at another class of heroes in the home. They are those who endure domestic unhappiness and lack of sympathy from the ones who have promised to cherish them through life. Many a man is driven to ruin by a life made terrible by domestic nagging and fretting. Given no attention, left to his own burdens, knowing the unfaithfulness of a wife. What a life to live! And yet men are going on, saying nothing and protecting their children from an evil mother.

Far more numerous, however, are the wives whose lives are made a daily martyrdom by husbands whom drink, temper and neglect have turned to brutes. They suffer tortures unknown to those who are sainted for

having persevered in their faith. But when the books are opened in heaven it will be discovered that many of these wives have been real heroines of the earth.

That man who is true to his conscience every day is a heroic man. The mixings of our social and business arrangements throw us into continual temptation on this score. We are all controlled by conditions which make us say to ourselves: "Be a little easy now; they are all doing it, why should not I?" There is a strong tendency to level down, instead of bringing up. We are losing, some of us, the heroic conscience that is the glory of Christianity. But the man who will not sell his higher self to his lower self, his spirituality to his carnality is heroic. With the Christian thirty-six inches must mean a yard, sixteen ounces must mean a pound; honest debts must be paid, one's word must be as good as his oath, and in all things he must be square.

Some one has said that many teachers and scientific men have sold their Christianity out because if it were true, then their own lives would need radical attention. It is just as true of many men and women brought up in the Christian faith. Preoccupation or worldliness, the selling out of conscience has taken the heroic attributes of home training away from them.

That man is heroic, to-day, who tries to awaken another life to the higher attainments. To save a man from drowning, from a burning building, is heroic. But in these days of worldliness and indifference to spiritual things, the Salvation Army officer and soldier and kindred movements that go out and on the street corner work to save the lost, are doing heroic things. And I am beginning to see that any man who takes time to awaken man's higher nature to its best possibilities and

thus save body, mind and spirit to the higher life, is doing a heroic thing. It takes strength and will and a fine sense of the best to go against the tendency of the hour for money, fame, pleasure and social standing, and give one's self to making human life better.

Once a ragged boy met a great philosopher on the street. The old philosopher shows him the road to scholarship, culture and wider thought. But the lad shakes his head and says: "It is not for me, I have tried to read, but I hate school and all its belongings." Then the old master says: "My boy you cannot do this alone, you need a teacher; I will take you to my home, and I will make you my disciple, and I will pour all of my soul into your soul." The boy accepts the offer and the street urchin becomes a greater philosopher than his master. There they are in history, Socrates and Plato. "Ah, when did any man ever grow strong or great but that someone took stock in him and believed in him!"

It is heroic business these days, to let go some of the pleasures of theatre, golf, tennis, and many social opportunities and give such time to saving men and women from their sins. It is heroic business for a father and mother to talk to their own children about their needed salvation from sin, and to set an example of new piety that shall command respect for the Christ whom they claim to love.

The hero does not have to show quality alone on the battlefield. He can do it in the every-day associations at home and in business. It isn't that which comes like a flash of lightning; it is the true spirit of Christ within us, getting out and showing its mettle day by day that declares the finest heroism.

And that man who is fighting to recover himself, after

falling, is a grand, heroic man. How thrilling it is in a race to see a man who has met with a mishap and behind in the race, coming up from behind and going forward and winning the contest! David's greatest heroism was not in his fight with Goliath but his fight for recovery. Are you not glad it is in the record? A man cannot always recover his lost position in society, in the business world, in health, but he can recover in the moral world.

"Ruskin tells us that the black mud from a footpath in the outskirts of a manufacturing town, is composed of four elements: clay, mixed with soot, a little sand and water. These four may be separated each from the other. The clay particles, left to follow their own instinct of unity, become a clear, hard substance so set that it can deal with light in a wonderful way, and gather out of it the loveliest blue rays only, refusing the rest. We call it then a sapphire. The sand arranges itself in mysterious, infinitely fine parallel lines, which reflect the blue, green, purple and red rays in the greatest beauty. We call it then an opal. The soot becomes the hardest thing in the world, and for the blackness it had obtains the power of reflecting all the rays of the sun at once in the vividest blaze that any solid thing can shoot. We call it then a diamond. Last of all, the water becomes a dewdrop and a crystalline star of snow." Thus God can and does transform the man of sin who turns to Him, into pure and shining jewels fit for His heavenly home.

The novelists of to-day will have it that one's best success comes from satisfying his selfishness and self-indulgence, so as to thrust one's way to what he wants.

There seems to be a desire to rob God of His rights in us, and to satisfy ourselves in all we do. But Christ shows that if a man give his life like this, he loses it. He declares we must not throw it away on some poor, tawdry thing. We are not made to nose, and grunt, and gobble round the swine troughs, shoving and pushing for what we can get. The world does have its gifts to offer—real gifts, though very fleeting. But if you study the record of those who have taken these gifts and used them you will discover that, for them, the wages of sin was death.

If you would take life at its biggest and highest, you will have to be heroic and carry your quest into the finer ways of human existence. "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, because they shall be filled." Whatever you need to be, you *can* be. Live close to the Master and you will feel the thrill of His wisdom and love.

All can be heroic in their relation to God and His laws, and to do so, is to be making the "good fight of faith" that brings the ultimate crowning of God's approval and the bestowing of the badge of honour that brings everlasting joy to its receiver.

XVI

THE WORLD'S GREATEST ASSET: CHARACTER

"A perfect and an upright man."—JOB 1:8

OVER the temple door in a Southern Island this inscription was carved: "The world was given to us for our upbuilding, not for the purpose of raising sumptuous houses; life for the discharge of moral and religious duties, not for pleasurable indulgence; wealth to be liberally bestowed, not avariciously hoarded; learning to produce good actions, not empty disputes."

In one word, this statement can all be summed up in CHARACTER. Love may be the greatest thing in the world, but character is the world's greatest asset. It will remain when all things else are taken away. You cannot lose character. It will stay when your money is gone. It will stay when your friends are forsaking you. You cannot burn up character. You can burn up your house, your money, and your clothes, but you cannot burn your character. It will not blow away; it cannot be lost. A reputation may be lost in one act of your life. But character stays forever.

George William Curtis speaks of an English picture called, *How They Met Themselves.* "A man and a woman, haggard and weary, wandering, lost in a dark

wood, suddenly meet the shadowy figures of a youth and a maid. Some mysterious imagination fixes the gaze and stills the hearts of the wanderers, and their amazement deepens into awe as they gradually recognize themselves as once they were, the soft bloom of youth upon their rounded cheeks, the dewy light of hope in their trusting eyes, exulting confidence in their springing step, themselves blithe and radiant with the glory of the dawn."

Thus each morn the soul meets itself. Yesterday's thought and act report themselves in to-day's habit and character. And journeying on, where we are, what we are, the soul meets not another but itself. Character at the end stands.

In the development of our theme we desire to express the thought that a man is known by six things; his character, what he is; his conversation, what he says; his conduct, what he does; his contributions, what he gives; his creed, what he believes, and his vision, that which gives him his ideals.

First, his character, what he is. Adelaide Proctor once wrote:

> "I have known a word hang star-like
> O'er a weary waste of years,
> And it only seemed the brighter
> Looked at through a mist of tears."

There are star-like words shining above the moving years; above the low levels of human life; words that dictionaries cannot define, except crudely, or by the way of suggestion. Home, mother, are such words. Character is another star-like word, quite impossible of definition.

Character is not created in the crisis, it is only exhibited. "He was makin' himself at the time," we read in Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott,* "but he didna ken maybe what he was aboot till years had past." The years of strain in the White House did not produce Lincoln—they only discovered him.

Our characters are forming daily. They are like cement which is shaped in the mould, and retains its impress. Our souls take on the impress of the mould in which they are cast.

The process is not a negative one. We select the patterns with our own choosing, and our souls are worked after the models which we select. We decide to what imperative influences we will give up our souls.

"There are many models after which we may elect to form our characters. The law of association is imperative. Like the stamp on the coin, the stamp on the soul shows where it is minted, and what is its value. It cannot be hidden if one's companions have been low, base and unclean; nor if they have been those princely souls whose lives have been clean and honourable. The image and the superscription will tell its own secrets."

To-day thought is doing wonderful things everywhere, except in the development of character. It is true that foundation elements are being discussed as never before. Ancestry and environment appoint certain things, and these are very well understood; but character, the supreme thing, is not being taught as in days past and gone. Too often "character is left to grow wild; is given no succor, no inspiration from the power of intelligence." Dr. Gordon says, "One may as reasonably expect a child to play in safety upon the confines of a

jungle, with the hiss of the snake and the growl of the wild beast audible from the thicket, as for a young man to hope to keep his honour, maintain his purity and hold fast his integrity in the peril of the world without the application of Christian intelligence to the business of living."

A strong, true character is not the result of mere external condition; it involves the living spirit within—the physical nature, the mental life and the force of the moral consciousness. "Whoever shows forth the moral conception with his other forces indicates the prophecy of what he is to be, no matter how crude and rude his life may be. If there is richness toward God nothing can obscure or gainsay such a character."

Second, a man's character is seen by his conversation, by what he says. Next to mind and spirit, is speech. Through it mind reaches mind and it produces evil or good. The hand cannot touch the soul, nor the eye reach it—but a word can reach it and tempt its weakness, inflame its passions, or strengthen its virtues.

Just as water reveals the springs from which it comes; just as the mind reveals its teachers, so the words we speak reveal what is behind our character. "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

"The spark buried under the bushes is uncovered by the winds, and kindles a conflagration. The word spoken by man has the same power. A word uttered can produce a war, engender trouble and make mischief. The same tongue uttering other words can bring peace, quicken kindness, soften anger and save life."

The mind of man becomes assimilated to that upon

which it dwells. Bad words, harmful words, recoil on him who utters them. When a man speaks we begin to know his character and he is judged accordingly. He whose words are good will be approved; he whose words are evil will be condemned. Skillfully used, steam will set a factory in motion; mismanaged, it will wreck it. So with words. Let God make the soul fountains of thought clean and sweet by His Spirit, and there need be no fear but what the word spoken will be seasoned with salt and kindness.

Third, a man's character is revealed by his conduct, by what he does. Matthew Arnold said that conduct was three-fourths religion. "What if your life within should suddenly be embodied in some growth without that would be the answer to your soul? What if every miserly thought should become a chestnut hull, with its thorns, defending the rich kernel within? What if your starved spiritual nature should take on the form of a stunted and scrubby oak? What if your vices should reappear as spider-webs and gypsy-moths while all your lesser sins should become scale and parasite, slowly eating out the life of the tree? What if your life should take on the form of an apple tree that has used all the rain and the sun and earth to increase the wood fibre and multiply leaves, but only an apple here or there? The world of nature rebukes us for our character and conduct. If we are wise we will never again go down into hell expecting to come up with spirits redeemed."

The object in life would be to save character and not to save strength, wisdom or wealth. If there be those who would not keep character unless they can at the same time keep all their power, wealth and wisdom, I

do not agree with them. If there be those who would not keep their friendship with God unless they can keep some of their strength, wisdom and wealth, I do not agree with them. If I can keep character and also keep all my honours, office and wealth, I will do that. If I can keep my divine character by losing some of my honours and wealth and office, I will do that. I want the wealth of the world, the wisdom of the schools and books, the friendships of men and women, so long as these strengthen my character. But when these things begin to weaken my relation to God, I want to be stripped of these things.

Fourth, a man's character is revealed by his contributions, by what he gives to the world. God is ever giving; the springs of His mercy are running over, the goodness of His heart always flows toward us, the sweetness of His love is still dropping. God even gives to His enemies. Who would send provisions to his enemy? The dew of God's bounty drops upon the worst. As the sun gives life and joy to all the world, so the divine goodness supplies all with good things. It is the emblem of God to "make His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and send rain on the just and on the unjust."

Does a man give because others give? Is his giving a forced product lacking the cheerfulness of the Master? Then his character is known to the world as well as to God, and there is no recompense for such giving. True liberality is born in the heart. "It is not engendered in the regions of calculation and expediency." "God loveth a cheerful giver."

The true principle of giving is to make God supreme in all our affairs, and to act as stewards of His money,

for it is His, loaned to us for awhile, but demanding an accounting by and by.

And this stewardship of giving is to be found in whatever resources may be ours. The resources of mind and heart are worth more to the world than that of money. "Have you silver and gold? If not, what? Have you enthusiasm? The world needs it. Have you courage? Impart it. Have you good judgment? Scores of projects are dying because of its need. Have you cheerfulness? The Pollyannas are few. Have you eloquence? Become an Apollos. Have you love? Show it, it is God's best giving. Every man and woman reading these lines is a storehouse of employed treasures; a great room of unused machinery; a plant that may grow to heaven. Look yourself over. Pasteur had neither silver or gold, and yet his scientific researches blessed the world. He gave what he had. Frances Willard had no gold but she gave the world a consecrated personality and did what she could. Kepler and Newton, Faraday and Davy, Fox and Goodyear, Reynolds and West, Wedgewood and Harvey, Hanway and Miller, Watt and Curvier, Carlyle and Scott, Handel and Bach, Livingstone and Stanley, Beecher and Brooks, Edison and Burbank—these had neither silver nor gold, but gave what they had to the world." Indeed gold is a poor equivalent for what they had to give the world. We can stamp ourselves with Christ's image and give ourselves to the world of to-day and make character for time and eternity.

Fifth, a man's character is revealed by his creed, what he believes. To-day there is a tendency to minimize one's creed. There is an antipathy against creeds

in many quarters. The man of to-day refuses to be bound by beliefs and opinions that have no other claim to reverence than their age. It is well to prove all things. But this unrest and search has brought an indifference in church and religious things. The other day Alfred Russel Wallace wrote his *Social Environment and Moral Progress,* in which he maintains that while the higher nature of man has developed immeasurably in some directions from the standpoint of morals, man is to-day elevated little above the earliest condition that history records. People are saying, why not organize on a basis of good-will and social service? Many churches have done this, but only a few of them have endured. A life or a church cannot be built up upon sentiment or good works. That has been tried and failed. The Catholic Church lives on its four great creeds, and moves forward to-day in gripping the masses and influencing the world as no other church. Men who have gone out to do things for this world have had great creeds. The men who have gone out to far away places, are men whose minds have surrendered to a creed. The men who give the largest service to-day for the benefit of the world, are those who have a creed. "We share the life of God as we share the purposes of God."

The man who does not sincerely accept the teachings of Jesus Christ, will not have their privileges. "Many a man claims for himself a liberty of decision and arbitration which is entirely without justification unless the temper of his life recognizes that he is here to be a saviour."

If I interpret the Master's teachings correctly, the Christian man should be the most arousing and com-

pelling force of God in this world. And the man who will dwell much with the teachings of Jesus, will go out with a passion to serve Him and His church. If the laymen gets hold of God, it is not he who persuades men, but God in him. Character is won as a man loses himself to some cause that is big enough to elicit his best effort, some interest sufficient to command attention.

A man's creed need not be a long one, and it can be a charitable one. It should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as a revealer of God's love, but also in Him as a Saviour from sin. Jesus is entitled to be heard in all moral questions that affect life, but more—He is to be accepted as a SAVIOUR. The creed that makes men good, holy in character, effective in spiritual alertness, will have to have this concept or truth. How can a man lead unless he is moved by the Spirit? And the Spirit comes to teach about Jesus. I believe that Christ takes His place with God for us as an abiding redemptive force, the greatest force that God has ever put forth to save man from his guilt.

A creed of negation will not accomplish anything. There is no life in it—nothing but deterioration and indifference to better living. Creative principles cannot live in a negative, destructive atmosphere, and no signal achievement can take place there.

A positive creed finds its fruit in doing. Ideas must be something more than dreams and plans must be more than castles in the air; somehow they must find their way out into the world of fact.

Paul wrote zigzag lightning. His truths were rugged and frontiered like the great Pacific Coast. He knew in whom he believed. His creed was short, but positive; it was "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

Sixth, a man's character is revealed by his vision, by what he looks forward to. There is an inner and outer side to everything, and the inner is the more important. The inner world is the CAUSE and the outer life is the EFFECT. If the cause of life is at fault, it is little that we can do in the outer life to correct it. But the inner can do all that is necessary to correct it. Fix the inner, the vision, and the outer, the material, comes out all right.

A visible thing, whether it be a chair, or a bank is "the OUTNESS OF A THOUGHT," according to Plato. All our sins, weaknesses of life; all our cleanness of life, are the result of visions, thoughts within. Tell me a man's vision, what he thinks within, and I will tell you what his character is going to be without.

At the battle of Waterloo, Wellington marched his men under the shelter of a little hill. They knew what was coming. All the weight of the French army was concentrated on that hill. Yet they marched steadily; they knew the expectations of their country and general, so with eager hearts they marched to their place. And now the order comes not to march, but to stand, to form the hollow square and to hear the thundering tread of the unseen cavalry mounting the other side of the hill. Now they appear, Marshal Ney leading, coming down upon them—and they stood just to endure. How could they do it? Behind them was the music of their Highland homes, the bagpipes playing tunes that had the inspiration of hundreds of years behind them. They had a vision of the heroes of the past, in the music of that hour. Strike down those pipers, hush their music, and the endurance of the hollow square would melt away into defeat.

If we, to-day, will get back to a vision of the Christ, and those who believed in Him and worked and wrought for Him, we too will find an impulse and a thought of standing in our day for a character hid in Him.

Holman Hunt has given us a picture of Christ at the door of man's soul. "The stranger's brow is broad. His smile holds indescribable sweetness. His figure breathes majesty and beauty. His forehead is crowned with thorns, and lo, the thorns have blossomed! His jewelled robe is blue with the purity of the sky. In his hand is the lantern that burns with red light, like the flame of conscience, that burns with fear and terror to the darkened soul! The door at which he stands is overgrown with weeds and ivy vine. At one corner the spider hath spun its web. The thistle has sprung up between the flagstones, showing that no visitor hath entered this house that stands in the street where wisdom dwells. The stranger stretches out his hand and knocks, but no man regards. Arise! Fling wide thy door! Lo, 'tis the Master-Builder! He comes to help thee, enrich thy home. Lingering in the library, he will open to you his manuscripts, and listening, your heart will burn within you. Standing in reason's room, lo, the beauty of the Lord will be upon you. In this gallery where imagination dwells he will walk with you, and pictures that eye hath not seen, nor the mind ever conceived, will stand forth until the walls are like unto the walls of heaven for their lustrous light. In the chambers of peace he will abide with you. Dwelling with him, quietness and confidence shall be your strength, while without, the vine shall prosper and the fig-tree fail not. And when the earthly house of this tabernacle falls, your heavenly

guest, the Master-Builder, will go forth with you, lead you across the threshold into the house of character that is eternal, unto its palace of ivory, and its chamber of peace, built eternal in the heavens.''

"O that each in the day
Of his coming may say,
I have fought my way through;
I have finished the work
Thou didst give me to do."

XVII

THE WORLD'S GREATEST QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

"What is your life?"—JAMES 4: 14

A GREATER question no man can put to himself. The question concerns the real man not the conventional one. We are not asking about pomp, circumstance, standing, fame or wealth but about the essential man. We do not want to know about dress, honours or social fame, but about the inmost heart of man.

What is your life in its reviews? It is good to reflect, provided one does not lose heart. Often one goes back to where his plans were upset, programs shattered and becomes bitter over wrongs done to him.

Suppose God should judge you the same way. Back there you attended church, and Sunday school and had good ideals of life. Now the Bible is unread, the church is neglected, prayers unsaid, and you are stained with sin. You did mean to be honest, but you lied. You did mean to be kind, but a controversy came up and you became selfish. You did mean to keep clean, but you were out in the wrong party and got caught and meshed up in sin. The failures are back there, and they come up like ghosts and they will not down at your bidding.

Edgar Allan Poe saw this, and represented the failure

of life as sitting in the form of a raven over his study door and ever chanting a dreary refrain:

> "And my soul from out that shadow
> That lies floating on the floor
> Shall be lifted, nevermore."

He declared that failure darkened, forever, the sun; silenced, forever, the heart-melody; built high walls of despair about the soul.

But Christ helps us here. The Old Testament shows us men who are mentioned in the New Testament. Noah, Moses, David, Solomon, Isaac, and Jacob are shown in the New Testament as having won; victories are theirs in the end. God says, "I have blotted out thy transgressions as a cloud. I have drowned them in the sea. I have cast them behind my back. I have removed them as far as the east is from the west."

God gives us hope in these statements. Many battles may have been lost by you in the past, yet final and eternal defeat has not yet come. Many wounds have been received in the spiritual ideals of your life, but there is recovery for you. There is balm in Gilead.

"The city has its offal-heap where refuse matter is destroyed; each home has its garret, the contents cast out at regular intervals. The individual throws away his old clothes, tools and vehicles. Why should not the soul have its refuse valley where the past is dumped out of life and the memory cleansed."

"Reflection upon past sins is good only so long as it produces revulsion from sin and like a bow shoots the soul toward God and righteousness. God is like a mother who forgives the child's sin into everlasting for-

getfulness. God receives the soul as the sea the bather and returns it cleansed, purified and made sweet. Gather up, therefore, all thy sins, old wrongs, old hatreds, burning angers and memories of men's and women's treacheries; stuff them into a bag and heave it with them into the gulf of oblivion. Your life is not in the past, but in the future."

No one need despair. All can be saved from whatever is working your ill. Stop that wrong right now and you will be saved. "But my sins," you say, "they are as a cloud between me and God. I cannot see Him. What shall I do?" Look up! Have you ever seen a cloud but what the sun finally penetrated? And so God through the brightness of His mercy in Christ has mastery over all sin and no cloud of guilt over man's head has been able to keep his soul in the shadow, when he with asking eyes, looks up to God for help.

What is your life in its intentions? You will agree with me that a man is not to be judged by single detached acts, but by the tendency of the whole life. There are only a few saints in the world's history. And they are so because far removed from us. John Wesley was proud. Toplady who wrote *Rock of Ages,* was a controversialist. Even Washington and Lincoln have been assailed by historians.

The mass of men are neither angels nor devils. The representative man has lights and shadows; affections and hatreds; magnanimity and pettishness. He is neither white nor black, but a whitey-brown. It is for us to see the angel or the devil in man. But to bring out the good we must see the best in our fellows. Jesus always observed this rule and because He did, He won

men and women to His truth. We must be careful how we judge a man's life. When we turn to the details of David's life we find many things out of accord with truth and nobleness. Were we to judge the man during his passion, we would give him no chance. But the wrong moment to judge a man's life is when the subtlety of temptation or frenzy, or passion is upon him. At that moment he is not master of himself; he is possessed. Let him come to himself. Then if he should laugh at his frenzy; if he should look with coolness upon his sin, he is bad. Let us never forget that God said to David, "As long as it was in thine heart to build the temple, it shall be as though thou didst build it." God judges by the intentions. If a man does his best to save a drowning man, even if he does not succeed, we honour him for his intentions. Many a man will be saved not for his noble work accomplished but for his intentions.

What is your life in its plans and purposes? Have you a plan? Have you a purpose? Not purposing to do something is an equivalent to a purpose to do what is bad. When men live only in conference with circumstances lying next to them, they lose their bearings. The house that was empty became the domicile of seven devils. Satan recruits his ranks from vagrants. Running water is sweet water. Electricity will keep to the wire until it reaches a break in the wire. A drifting boat drifts down stream. In the light of these statements, let me ask again: What is your purpose in life? You can do whatever you will to do, what God needs you to do. A Harvard student said years ago that he intended to be a United States Senator and John C. Calhoun became one. It should be the plan of every man to

build on so large a scale that it should overlap and stretch beyond his profession. A man cannot measure himself in his law, in his writing, in his banking, in his business, but what he is in the light of God's truth.

In your plans take into account your whole life. The soul needs size and boldness. You need a long reach to your plans. Get a long look, away over into the beyond, as well as here.

Count your wealth. You have physical strength; a brain that can be a storehouse of great thoughts, and the fountain of noble speech. You have a heart behind the brain which can throb and thrill with emotion and it can use the brain as a great musician uses the organ for the expression of his passion. This heart is a spark of the divine fire and light; it is a divine gift, the centre of all being, the very citadel of the whole man, from which the government of the whole life is carried on. You belong to the same plane as Paul, John, Handel, Shakespeare, Browning, Drummond, Roosevelt and many others. You have at your disposal a certain number of years, in which men have found it possible to establish empires, write great books, lead new movements, build great cities, and inaugurate great reforms. In YOU reside forces which will flow out into immeasurable issues. You are the sole artist, poet, thinker, searcher, builder, preacher, and writer of this solid world. That is what your life means, and what it gives you. What are you going to do with your life?

Through heedlessness, through lightness of heart, through avarice, through aversion to that which is serious, and indifference to that which is high, man puts off vital decisions to make character until he awakes to find

that great sections of life have slipped away; the power of doing good is gone. Before a man knows it, sometimes he has gambled his life away and all because he did not have a plan or purpose, or he never made up his mind what to do with it.

"History tells us that in the triumphal procession of a Roman emperor there marched a captive king who was made a slave to tend the master's fish pond. How contemptible the task to one in whose veins ran royal blood and whose memories were of ancestral kings. But all this is as nothing compared to the degradation that overtakes him who carries two eternities in his heart, yet compels his soul to fetch and carry for the body through his three score years and ten."

What is your life in its meditations? "Meditation is a mental bath: reverie is a hammock dream. Meditation is the night rain that starts the growth of the plant; that opens up the rose in its beauty. It is the sun bringing colour to nature, ripeness to tree and vegetable. Follow a good thought out; chase it like a rabbit, to its lair. Carelessness in thinking is a descending staircase from success to failure. Wrong thinking is going on a train in the wrong direction, away from the best in life."

The thought lying at the centre of your mind, shapes the life. No more certainly does the heart send the pulsing blood through the body than that careless thinking through the brain shapes your life and mine. Just as the mould shapes the cast of iron poured into it, so life is moulded by thought.

"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." What is your heart thought? What would you rather be? Would you rather be rich than good? If so, that is your

true self. Would you rather have fame than purity? If so, that is your true self. If your ideal be that of a worldling, you are a worldling.

"The ideal! That is everything." Lowell has said, "The great art of being a man, the sublime mystery of being yourself, is something to which one must be apprenticed early." Emerson said: "Do not leave the sky out of your landscape."

In olden times the impressive moment of the crowning of the Czar of Russia, was the moment when he crowned himself. No hand but his could put the crown on his head.

We with our hand crown or uncrown ourselves. From God we receive the dignity, the privilege, but often we refuse to be kings, but slaves of passion.

Shakespeare represents the pilgrim as passing the graveyard with fear and trembling, lest ghosts and spectres should appear and gibber at him. If God should resurrect all the vital impulses and the noble aspirations that once stood radiant in your life, but which have been slain by neglect, who could have the courage to stand in their presence and face their indictment. "The seed springing up, but withering when the sun is risen; the mountain stream setting forth bravely on its journey to the sea, but soon sinking away in the bad lands; these are types and symbols of goodness in men that have not gone on to full fruition."

What is your life in its associations? We are tremendously influenced by our companions. "Man is not so wonderful in his power to mould as he is to take from others. Steel to hold, he is wax to take. The photo-

graphic plate and the radio receiver take whatever may be about them."

"Man when he is thrust out into the world, finds his way disputed by swift footed contestants. And it is not always a fairly contested game that is on. Envy, jealousy, malice, treachery and wickedness in all forms he must meet and reckon with. Uriah Heep will be there. Shylock demanding his pound of flesh will be there. Korah, lying, will be there. But you will also find great hearts and great minds. You will meet men who will confirm your belief in a devil and you will meet people that you will want to call angels."

"In many cases you can choose, knowing what men are. In such choosing it is important that the selection should be from among one's betters. To choose beneath you may be magnanimous but it is dangerous. No influence in the world so pernicious as that of evil or foul-minded associates."

In biting irony, Frederick the Great gave a house to Voltaire the sceptic. On the walls of the house the king had painted some disreputable scenes from the great sceptic's life. How long did he stay in that house? Until he could get out; and he never went back.

When you are at your best, or when you are ill, do you like to think of your evil associates? No! there is a terrible irony in it all. Unclean, unholy folks must get away from the badness of memory and life to the theatre, the movie, to more pleasure, so as to stifle and kill out the memory of the evil.

Why not choose to put on the walls of memory the things that will bring joy, comfort and inspiration.

Well, we are painting on our memories the associations of life, and may it not be that these will make the heaven or the hell of the future life?

What is your life in its entanglements? Are you tied up to the world? The world is most masterful these days in its demands. "It is an age of rose water and cushions;" an age of luxury and finery. People care more for their stationary than for their morals. The path of the theatre is well trod, but the way to the church is covered over with weeds. Social life has the emphasis and religious life has the left-overs. The pleasure of golf on Sundays and card parties in the evening, or theatre engagements, ring true to the average worldling to-day. In one place where I was it was stated that the leading woman of the church played poker Saturday nights and up to two o'clock Sunday morning, but was found in her place Sunday morning in church.

Are you tied up to some sin? Have you taken it into your life? Fearful will be its consequences if continued on to death. An American soldier in Manila insulted a Filipino, who took him to a bar-room, made him drunk, then opened one of his veins with a knife and inserted a few drops of the blood of a leper. Sin is leprousy according to the Bible. Are you dealing in it?

The fact of sin needs no demonstration. Let it be recognized for it is here. What shall we do with it? There is no forgiveness of sin in nature. That which a man sows he reaps and there is no magic that can change tares into wheat. Consequences pursue man to the last days of his life. At this moment we each carry our ancestors in our blood; in the atoms of our body; in the fibres of our minds.

The second fact of sin is that in our consciousness there is no past for sin. There may be a statute of limitations for social offences; but there is none for sin. It follows us on all our days.

You are in the stocks of sin. Do you remember that Paul and Silas had their feet in the stocks at the jail, but God came and delivered them! There is a delivery for us. Jesus is called a Deliverer because He saves men from their sins. In Luke they brought a charge against Jesus which reads: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." No man needs despair if he comes to Jesus with his sins. He can be forgiven and saved from their consequences spiritually.

What is your life in its unfoldings? It is just what you please to make it. It is your life, it is largely in your hands. You can make it a thing of honour or of shame; a blessing or a curse; a fountain of joy or a burden of woe; a centre of light or a source of gloom. You are the master of your fate; you are lord of yourself. You are free to make your life high or low, fine or coarse, full of kindness or selfishness.

Recall Mrs. Shelley's story, *Frankenstein.* The hero discovered the secret of life. He determined to make a man not like God's man, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, but a tabernacle that would not dissolve, and so he fashioned a body with all its intricacies of muscles, veins and nerves. He visited graves, dissecting rooms to gather the various parts, and then, with great skill, he put them together, bones, muscles, skin, all—a perfect body; and then he quickened that body with the life he had created. But the result was not a perfect man, but a monstrosity. He had omitted something. He had forgotten the social

instinct, and there were terrible results. The monster betrayed his best friend. He murdered the brother of the man who had created him; he strangled his bride, and at last came to a tragic end in the Northern seas.

So men to-day in their making, leave something out. And there is a lack of balance, a moral weakness that destroys the value of life. Samson lacked balance and failed. Many men are derelicts, floating out and out, God knows where; they do not seem to realize it until it is too late. At last the unfolding appears, and with a cry they are swallowed up in the abyss of their folly and sin.

What is your life in its influence? Man is making a marvellous pilgrimage. If light is in him, he shines; if darkness rules, he shades; if his heart glows with love, he warms; if frozen with selfishness, he chills; if corrupt, he poisons; if pure-minded, he cleanses.

We watch with interest the flight of the dirigible. Much more interesting and important is the flight of a life through this world. A selfish man carries a malign atmosphere. Suspicious people make envy and jealousy follow in their wake. Moody men distribute gloom and depression. Domineering men provoke rebellion and breed irritations. Great hearts carry sunshine; their coming changes the climate, oils the bearings of life and makes right living easier.

A good woman strengthens virtue and helps to keep the family life clean. A bad woman destroys and blasts the home and corrupts the body. A good woman radiates the goodness of God; a bad woman damns like Satan, while posing as an angel of light.

Have you any influence in your home? Any over

your son and daughter? If not, why not? One great educator says: "Every year I receive letters from fathers and mothers who have sons at . . . asking me to interest myself in the Christian life of some boy. Nearly all of these letters close by saying, 'Do not tell my son that I have written to you.' Why not? Why should not the boy know that those who stand nearest to him are more interested than anybody else in his being a Christian?"

What is your life in its obedience? God commands our interest, our money, our strength, our life. Are we obedient? What was it for Israel to obey? It was to look at the brazen serpent on the pole. What was it for Noah to obey? It was to build the ark and go into it. What was it for Paul to obey? It was for him to go to Damascus and to the home of Ananias that he might receive his sight.

Here is a man walking the banks of the Seine in Paris. He is about to end his life with the cup of poison but puts it down. He raises his pistol, but he does not shoot. He heard the story of Jesus and dropping to his knees William Cowper wrote:

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform;
> He plants his footsteps in the sea,
> And rides upon the storm."

Are you obedient? If so, then you are in line with God's power and help. You are connecting up with the resources of the infinite and victory is coming to you.

What is your life in its decisive now? "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Satan has

one advantage over Jesus. One can drift into Satan's kingdom. But to gain Christ's kingdom, you must make a decision. One who is in the Old World has first to decide, before he can come to America.

The largest number of people in this world who are lost, are lost through indecision. Not one of the long list ever choose Satan freely and deliberately, but inaction, delay, neglect bring on the loss of spiritual attainments and victory.

Neglect to eat or drink and you will cease to exist. Neglect to read and you will soon find your mind empty. Neglect your business and it will soon go into bankruptcy. Neglect God and you will lose Him.

Have you thought that your power to decide is diminishing? It is true. It is harder with the years. Life is a direction, a tendency, then it is a permanency. The direction is good or bad, the tendency is faster and faster in the chosen path. It takes more to stop this tendency as the years go on. It takes more to stop a train when it is going fifty miles an hour than when it first starts out. Habit is powerful and men are bound up by it, after awhile.

Now is God's time. Because on the divine side all things are ready. Now is your time because it is in your possession.

Many years ago a mother came to Dr. Chalmers and said: "Doctor, I cannot bring my child to Christ." He said, "Let me talk to her." When the doctor came to her, he said: "Now they are bothering you a great deal about this question. Now suppose we leave it alone for a year. How will that do?" She hesitated and said she didn't think it would be safe to wait a year, something

might happen. "Well, that's so," replied the doctor. "Suppose we say six months." She didn't think this would be safe. "Well, say three months," replied the doctor. After a little hesitation, she said: "I don't think it would be safe to put it off at all," and they went down on their knees and she found Christ. Would it not be well for all who read this story, to follow her example and make sure of the Gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus! Now! Now, let us be God's own children.

"My life is not my own, but Christ's who gave it,
And He bestows it upon all the race;
I lose it for His sake, and thus I save it;
I hold it close, but only to expend it;
Accept it, Lord, for others, through thy grace."

XVIII

THE WORLD'S GREATEST DISAPPOINTMENTS: GOOD BUT IRRELIGIOUS PEOPLE

"Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God."—DEUT. 4:23
"I have set Jehovah continually before me."—PS. 16:8

THERE are many disappointments in this world. Some of these come from the marriage relation. Divorce-court proceedings and private conversations reveal this side of life in a most significant manner. There are the disappointments of parents in their children. David's experience is a good example of that of many a home to-day. As he went to his chamber over the gate he said: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" And many a mother, to-day, cries out as did one mother centuries ago: "My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

Then there are the disappointments of friendship, of the commercial world, of the world of politics, of the world of health. How frequently we hear the remark: "Oh, I am so disappointed!" Yes, there are many disappointments in this world; even Christ wept over His disappointment with Jerusalem.

But I would have you consider, with me, the disap-

pointments that come from those of whom we expect much, and whose early career indicated the possession of great gifts of usefulness and influence. I believe that the world's greatest disappointments come from those who are naturally good, but irreligious in their lives. Bad people are a danger, but not so much so as people who profess to be good, who *are* good in many respects, but who by their irreligiousness, influence more greatly the mass of people in the world. The masses do not follow the bad; they follow the good—those who, seemingly, are prosperous, happy, social, genial, moral, good, yet not Christian.

The texts that I have placed at the head of this chapter, present two pictures concerning two types in human life. Which one of the two would you take into your business? Which would you select to be the husband of your daughter, or the wife of your son? Which one of the two represents *you*? Which one will help the world most?

It must be admitted that there is a goodness in the world, that comes from men and women who do not attend church; who do not pray, who do not read the Bible. Where did this goodness come from? Is it not a reflex of the goodness that came to them when they were young—when they were taught by their mother, or helped by a Sunday school teacher?

There are people in every community, who bear a part in many of the projects that make for the bettering of life and character—people who are most attractive in their personal contacts, who are beloved for many charms that radiate from their lives, who, while good, fail to exert the influence of a distinctly religious life.

Why is that so many who are lovable, helpful, agreeable to meet, able in counsel, sympathetic in sorrow and trouble, forget God? At one time they were interested in spiritual things, attended church faithfully, and kept holy days with God's people. But they have drifted away from these earlier days, and while they are still good, are irreligious. They are disappointing to God and to their own people, who brought them us.

Oh, these good people! We have met them, time and again, on the journey of life, and some of them meant more to us than even church people. They were real friends and we loved them. But, to-day, they are not what they ought to be in the matter of religion. What has brought about the change?

They have given up the ideals of youth. Now, what is an ideal? It is a standard of perfection that one would like to reach; it is a goal that a man sets before him. "Where there are no ideals the people perish." "Homer opened up a gallery of men in the clouds, and revealed Achilles as the ideal Greek. It became the ambition of every Athenian boy to emulate Achilles in his daily life." Athens became great and produced great orators, temples, poems and philosophers. And America has her ideal personalities in Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Wilson, Beecher, Edison, Emerson and Frances Willard. Who can estimate the value of these characters upon American life?

How is it to-day? A test, made in a school not long ago took the form of the following questions: "Who would you like to be?" The answers were, "Tunney," "Rockefeller," "Fairbanks," "Chaplin," "Mary Pickford," "Gloria Swanson," "Norma Talmadge." There

was not a choice for the ministry or letters. No doubt it were true, that, after the Lindbergh victory, many a youth caught the higher ideal of his achievement.

Two young women lived in the same house and were cousins. One slept in a room where she could look at the picture of Marie Antoinette; the other had, at the foot of her bed, a picture of Joan of Arc. Each girl, opening her eyes each morning, looked upon a picture. One saw a woman of beauty, yet untrue to the best of womanhood. The other saw a woman of intense conviction, articulated to a great vision, or ideal. One read of the viciousness of vice and folly, and her mind followed in that direction. The other read the purity and nobility of Joan of Arc. The one who read and looked upon Joan of Arc, became one of America's greatest benefactors, and lived a life of sweetness, which is now a blessed memory.

The ideals of many people are wrong, to-day. Elasticity of virtue, drifting away from holy things, absence of family devotion, following the crowd, going with the worldly-minded, have a force that is undermining the ideals of former days, and making many people disappointing to God.

Ideals, keyed up to Christ's teaching and life, will save us. As ever, he who lives in the truth of God, cannot help fashioning his life into something worth while. The work of the painter upon a piece of canvas appears, at first, to be merely a mechanical process. But away out of sight deep in the artist's brain, is an ideal which we do not perceive. Every moment, his hand is impelled by that shining vision within. Without this vision, the man would not be a painter; by it, he becomes an artist. So are we fashioned by our ideals. If they be worthy

and are followed, they make us noble and good. If they are not good, we fall below the standard of the call of God, and the demand of the best that often speaks to us. At the last life brings in a judgment that condemns us. To have the best, and not to use it, is a calamity.

Good people become disappointing because their time and strength are absorbed by worldly things. The world is more masterful to-day, than ever. It insists on a closer conformity to its own standards which, often, are coarse and in opposition to the finer standards of morality. It tolerates the Christian life, provided it be an easy-going and pleasurable one, with its calls subordinated to the calls of the world.

Saturday night has become a great theatre and social night. Sunday morning has become a rest morning—one on which to recover from the strain of the night before. People are too tired to go to church, and neglect of religious pursuits, brings dearth of spiritual grace.

Business has become insistent and demands the finest abilities and time; yet it seeks, not so much the ethics of life, as its gain. Mention of the dynamic of religion and the motive power of self-denial cause a yawn, and "stewardship" of the cross and Christ, is—with here and there an exception—lacking in all business affairs.

The young man emerges from his home, eager to make his place in the world. His time and strength are poured into his work and pleasure. The claims of his nobler self are allowed to go. He denies nothing of religion as yet, but the drift of the hour has caught him, and he is in the eddy of the world-drift. It is not long, before he is disappointing the hopes of many expectant friends.

A young woman, embodying much of sincerity, attends church and Sunday school and some of the social affairs connected with church life. After a little while, she comes into contact with the worldly man, and is led away by him into worldly things. She goes with *him*—only rarely can it be said he goes with *her*—and it is not long before the "call of the wild" has done its work. The worldly has killed out the spiritual. The girl is still good, but disappointing to her Master.

> "The world is too much with us—
> Late and soon, getting and spending
> We lay waste our powers,—
> We have given away our hearts—a sordid boon."

The world, to-day, needs an aggressive Christian life —the soul at work and at it mightily. Modest, quiet Christianity will not meet the issue of the hour. A religious experience in the past, is not sufficient for the call for fighting men and women of to-day. Only as we are aroused and are aggressive can the Church succeed.

Christ is out upon a world campaign. Every day He is leading a battle against selfishness and sin. He challenges all the heroism and self-sacrifice of men and women. Indifference and worldliness have no right in our lives. Every one must line up for, or against the right. When men want a political office, they organize a regiment of workers; they storm office, and shop, and capital and bring pressure to bear upon every influence available. When men want business, they plan a campaign, buy newspapers, organize their agents, mass their forces, and send them out to make connections.

Jesus insisted that men should not only give thought

to business and social life, but to God, and He demands that no claim of business, pleasure, or rest should ever set aside God's claim to worship, prayer and right example.

Paul says: "Put on the whole armour of God." The battle is on between God and Mammon, and oh, the apathy of the hour—the indifference to the challenge! It is as though General Pershing had called for an advance in France, and the colonel of one of the regiments in his command should meet his aide, who tells him that it is a good day to play golf, that there is a good picture show in the neighbourhood, or that a card-party is being arranged for, and the colonel should go to some one of these things, and come back after the battle has been fought, wondering that any one had the right to expect a gentleman to go soldiering, when such entertaining social affairs were in progress. Oh, these flabby men and women of the twentieth century—these sons of fathers who obeyed God, and duty, and worship, and Christ! How the times have fallen in some respects! The degeneration of men once strong, into mere pleasure mongers, of women into mere vanities and physical sensorium and flesh-selves, is the saddest spectacle in modern life. "Virtue is an achievement, character—a Victoria Cross, that has to be fought for, obedience a prize, given only at the crest of the Hill Difficulty." The call is to men, to get out into the battle-arena, to fight the good fight of faith, to become religious, and good, and like the great Master.

Many good people are disappointing, because they have come under the tyranny of pleasure. Amusements should never be given anything but a subordinate

place; they are not the chief things in life. Anything that lays an added weight on business, religion, or culture, should be set aside. "Laying aside every weight—" Whatever hinders our running is a weight. With one, it may be this thing, with another, that. All of us are hindered by our pleasures to-day, and move but tardily in the race.

Choose the things that you would like to have Christ find you doing, if He were to call upon you. Suppose He were going to visit your home to-night. Would you be at the movies? Would you be playing cards? Where would the Bible be? Hidden in a corner, or spread open on the table?

In the days of the Civil War, Lincoln once saw a soldier about to enter a saloon. He came up quickly to the man and touched him on the shoulder: "I do not like to see our uniform in there," he said, and without another word, walked on, leaving the young soldier too much astonished to say anything in reply. The true man is exhorted to put on the whole armour of God. There are many places where clean men and women can go, without bringing discredit upon Christ.

Many good people are disappointing because of unsettled convictions. It is true that many men and women, to-day, do not know what to believe. Intellectual unrest is current. Old doctrines and beliefs are being challenged or rejected, on every hand. Multitudes have broken with the past, cut their moorings and drifted out into the sea of new relationships, only to be driven and tossed about. Others, are uncertain and beginning to lean, and it is doubtful if they have sufficient depth of root to hold them from going over to the world. Even

the ministry is affected by the movements of the hour, and by its stammering utterance is adding to the perplexity of the religious situation.

But worldliness and intellectual uncertainty, bring weakening convictions. They destroy faith and render nerveless the work of God in the Church. "Philosophy is not Scripture; psychology is not revelation; a bridge-party is not a prayer-meeting; a theatre is not a church; a novel is not the Bible, and science, so called, is not always truth." A rose-water theory is not strong enough for the kingdom of God. "We must have an Atonement that will account for the communion-table; an upper room, that explains the Church and the presence of the Holy Spirit; a Cross, that reveals the love of Christ, as the objectifier of God's love. If we are invited to accept a hypothesis or speculation that sets aside the truth of the Word of God and His Spirit, we may be sure that the invitation comes from an alien hand—from a mind foreign to the genius of Jesus Christ."

Luther had convictions and acting upon them, gave us the Reformation. Wesley had convictions and saved England from revolution, and inaugurated a great religious revival which helped to bless the entire world of his day.

Convictions enter the world of wrong-thinking, and loose-living, and declare strongly for the truth. They are made in the presence of Christ and the searching of the Bible. Paul could say, "I believe, and therefore have I spoken." Peter said, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracle of God." Jesus said, "As my Father hath sent Me, so send I you." It is not necessary to proclaim human speculation, human dogma, hu-

man philosophy, no matter how fascinating or marvellously interesting. But it *is* necessary to proclaim the authoritative word of God. Whatever God has distinctly revealed and which is distinctly believed, must be distinctly declared.

"We have grown broad at the expense of depth. Our intensity has gone into latitudinarianism. Men are calling themselves tolerant when they are only tepid; liberal when they are only lukewarm. A tree cannot stand without roots. It must grip the solid earth, if it is to resist the storm and keep its branches in the sky."

Similarly with men and women. If they are rooted in profound reverence for things good, high and holy, they will not go down but up, to strength and holiness. Whims are not convictions; they are the make-shifts of weak, unsettled minds. Convictions are ideas wrought out by careful research and experience. Human guesses, petty criticisms, worldly alliances and sinful affiliations, do not make robust Christians. But living with Christ, absorbing His word, doing His will, obeying His Spirit, will give convictions that hold us firm, for His Church and kingdom.

It is conceded that there is some religion outside the Church. I have no doubt but that there will be many in heaven, who never joined a church. They have lived beautiful lives, thought the best thoughts, and, for some reason, did not see the necessity of uniting with the Church, or were where they could not do so, and God saved them. But Christ calls us to His Church and His communion. "This do in remembrance of Me," is bringing us to His truth, and making His organization effective in the world.

It is not doubted but that many are disappointed with the Church as it functions in the world of to-day. But it is doing the Lord's work as no other organization is doing it, and those who believe in Christ, should aim to banish that disappointment by renewing and renovating that which is weak, and unholy, in themselves and the Church of which they form a part.

Those who are in the Church working for its interests, God calls "My friends." Abraham believed in God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. God is moved by our trust and belief in Him. "If He were like the ungenerous ruck of us, who are quick to grow suspicious of Him, apt to read sinister meanings into His dealings with us, and to assume, with a surly snarl, this and that, He would forget us, and let us alone, until we were moved by different thoughts and attitudes of mind and heart."

"I am the Way," said Jesus—not the goal and the prize only, but the route as well. To be upon the road, to be in the Church, seeking for the big things of God—that, also, is to be in Christ.

"Even as a child," says Heine, "I knew God the Father, and when I reached the age of reason, saw Him in the Son; but now, I am a knight of the Holy Ghost, and I have learned that the end of religion is to ride abroad, giving my days to righting wrongs and vanquishing evils."

Many good people are disappointing God, to-day, because they give the benefit of nearly every doubt as to what they shall do, to the world. It is (let us say) Sunday. There is the call to take a trip in the car, and spend the day in sight-seeing, or visiting friends. Or it

is prayer-meeting night, but there is club-meeting on, or a fine concert being held or a movie of unusual interest that calls away from the place of duty and service. Religion is being subordinated to mundane concerns and the world is capturing our interest and allegiance.

But to decide after this fashion is traitorous. It is like a soldier leaving his post of duty, or a man leaving his business, week after week, and giving it no attention. What is likely to be the outcome? Disaster. Such an attitude has brought about the present-day condition in our churches, as to the various means of grace.

Many voices call us, which promise "a thrill," and "a kick," but they are barren, in the long run, and leave a long list of troubles behind them. "Be not conformed to this world," is a clarion-call to duty, and an incentive of usefulness for God.

Do not be satisfied with pumping wind into an organ, if you have the ability to sit at its keyboard and unloose divine harmonies. Dedicate your life to the highest; give it to God. There is nothing, this side of His heart, big enough, or worthy enough for you to spend your life in doing. He only is big enough to command all that you have, and return pay, commensurate with time and eternity.

When you feel that you are losing devotion to God, when His work becomes burdensome, when you worship Him only with lip and not with the heart, you may rest assured that you are weighted down with the world, that it is impeding your progress. "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, for it is better for thee to enter life maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into hell."

At a critical moment in the French Revolution, Barbaroux dared to ask for six hundred men who were ready to die. Far away in Marseilles, men heard the cry and six hundred of them left their homes, and started for Paris, carrying their lives openly in their hands ready, when the time came, to toss them away and die for their country. To-day when the *Marseillaise* is sung, it makes one's heart beat faster—to throb with faith and loyalty.

Jesus Christ calls to us, to give ourselves to His cause and work, to lay down our lives for the Church's sake. Often, it means sacrifice and hardship; it calls for devotion that is not of this world. But some are going with Him, unflinchingly, up the steep path leading to the goal, and expect to win for Him much of the power and glory of the day, in which they work with Him.

"We have stood gazing at some creature of the wilds, a thing all speed, and grace, and energy, in its natural state, but caught in youth, and tamed and penned into a paddock, now grown fat, and flabby, and lethargic, a pitiful travesty of what God meant that it should be, what it had in it, and still has. So does Christ look at those, who live for the world's poor prizes. Where is the fire, the spirituality, the heroism with which God endowed them, that they have sunk so low as to be pleased with a worldly life? How can people throw away a human soul and all its infinite possibilities, for such a life as that offered by the world?"

Some people who are good, are a disappointment to God because they will not do the right. You say, "I cannot do this." Out on such cowardice! You can do whatsoever you set yourself to do. Will to go with the

good, the true, the best, and these things come back to you. Whatever you do, you are responsible for—to God.

Romanes willed himself to be a Christian, through intellectual honesty and judicial mindedness, after facing the facts before him. If we will to go with the truth revealed to us, Christ will bring us through with honour.

You must will *something*. Do you want to hug the treasure of your heart for a whole eternity? Only God's good is big enough for that. Climb Calvary, before you make your choice. Stand under the shadow of the Cross, and make your choice in the light of Christ's teaching. You will not think of self-interest. For you to live, will be Christ. And the world that haunts you, grips you, you will not have. That selfish thing you have in your heart right now, by choice, will be of no use or value to God. If you have it when you come to Him, He will put you aside from Him. If you are to be His, you must will to fill up with His sufferings; you must carry on His work; you must take His salvation and apply it to the needs and troubles of your own time.

"If you ask, 'But, where do I come in?' you will not come in at *all*. You live for Him and are dead to self." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ," is the willing word that brings the ultimate glory and victory of life.

There are one or two things, I would like to have good but disappointing people remember.

First, that according to the New Testament, the Church is a visible institution, with visible sacraments, and visible officials and members. IT IS THE BODY OF CHRIST. It is through the Church, that God is going to

carry on public worship, that is essential to the saving of the world. One of the supreme questions for every right-minded person to ask, is this: DO YOU WANT TO KEEP ALIVE THE CHURCH OF GOD? Absence from the church means moral decay both for the individual and the nation. It is as important to go to church, as it is for you to go to business.

It is to be feared that many go to church simply as they go to a theatre, or an opera, or a club. They go to be pleased. The music must be fine, the services must be dignified for some, theatrical for others. The sermon must be polished, eloquent, short and winning.

Christ went to the synagogue to worship God. He went, because God had commanded that men should worship, and not forsake the assembling of themselves together. He went, because of the example He felt He ought to set to others. He went, because He knew the good of the people was linked with the public services of the sanctuary, as vitally as oxygen with the other elements of the air.

We must get this Christ-idea, if we are to live the right kind of a life. Neglect means drifting out, and away, from all the great conceptions of the life that belongs to a child of God. Doubt comes in; sensitiveness to wrong is hardened; the world gets more of us, and we drift, finally, away from our Lord.

In the Hebrides, you are never far from the sea. Go where you will, it comes to you. At every turn of the road, you catch glimpses of its glory and movement. "Always, its tang and the roaring of its breakers fills one's nostrils and one's ears." It soaks itself into the people's soul, so that they love its music and gurgling

surf. So ought the Church to reach out, and follow us, and have its music and faith rooted into our souls, so that we feel and love its presence, at all times.

"If life has not given you all you think you should have, don't throw away your hopes—get back to God; back to His Church. It will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Do not throw away your dreams, bring them with you to the Church, and see what its Christ can do for *you.*

The second thing to remember is, that you must meet yourself by and by. "Every man's work shall be made manifest." When Jesus came to His testing hour He could say, "The prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me." And Paul said: "I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith."

There is only one thing worth living for, and that is character. What trifles we live for! What shadows we pursue; what sad endings we have!

In biting irony, Frederick the Great gave a house to Voltaire the sceptic; and on the walls of the house the king had painted some disreputable scenes from the great sceptic's life. Do you know how long Voltaire stayed in that house? Until he could get out; and he never went back.

Worldly things are not worth living for, in the long run. The things we thought we loved and cared for, the night before, we hate next morning. Sin is two-faced; one, having a look of pleasure, the other, a look of dark despair. The last is the result of sin, when it has conceived and shows its true intent.

Junius thought he was a very good man. But he had a dream and an angel came and told him how his char-

acter weighed in the light of heaven. Here was the true account:

Personal ambition, 23; Love of praise, 19; Pride of denomination, 15; Pride of talent, 14; Love for authority, 12; Love for fellow-men, 3; Love for Christ, 4; Love for money, 10.

Suppose our character were weighed, to-day, in the light of heaven! Might it not read something like this?

Love of money, 35; Love of pleasure, 25; Love of ambition, 15; Love of talent, 15; Love for fellow-men, 4; Love for God, 6.

"Jesus Christ is marching on. Truth is overcoming error. Light is spreading." Years ago, there was a great drought in England. It continued for a long time. Everything was dry and parched, and the cattle died for want of food and water. Rivers dwindled, and ships and boats lay stranded. But, one day, the sky was overcast, and clouds came, and, in the night, people were awakened by the sound of rain. The wells were filled, the brooks filled up, the rivers flowed on, the stranded ships were lifted, the cattle had drink and all rejoiced.

To-day, the need is for the rain of righteousness, the filling up of the gaps of neglected duty, family worship, church-going and Christly living. To-day, in Christ's Name, and for the extension of His work and Church, I lay before those who once knew the way to the house of God, and the joy of Christ's presence, the need of allying themselves with the marching Kingdom of our God, and of His Christ.

Creon, a Greek sculptor slave, espying in the rough marble the possible beauty, took it and there put his

heart, and head and touch. Greece had said a slave must not, under penalty of death, espouse the cause of art. So into the cellar went the slave and there attended by his sister, proceeded with his work. Later there was a great display of art placed before Pericles, and one grouped proved more beautiful than any other, exciting the envy of the rival artists. But the author could not be learned. A maiden was dragged before the judges and the officers said: "This woman knows the sculptor, but she will not tell."

"To the dungeon then," cried Pericles. At the command, forth rushes a youth, with flowing hair, emaciated, but with shining eye, exclaiming: "O, Pericles, forgive the maid; she is my sister. I am the culprit. The group is the work of a slave." Up went the cry of the crowd: "To the dungeon with the slave." "As I live, No!" said Pericles. "Behold that group! Apollo decides by it, that there is something higher in Greece than an unjust law. Not the dungeon, but to my side, bring the youth." And, there the victorious crown of olives was placed upon Creon's brow.

Yes, the soul passionately following its Christ, is to be crowned, and is to stand the victor in the courts of heaven. Let us go on with Christ! If we do there will be no disappointments, but all will make for encouragement and establishment here and ultimately there, in heaven.

XIX

THE WORLD'S GREATEST OPPORTUNITY: TIME

Redeeming the time.—COL. 4:5

"BEFORE man came, time was. But when man came he used time without knowing how to measure it. A century flung into the abyss was a raindrop swallowed up by the sea."

"It is a far, faint cry from the mists of the remote past to the high tension of the split second of time, as noted to-day. What an opportunity time has been to man!"

"Before Adam came we have a picture of the Cave-man, trying to think. The picture presents Og trying to get hold of things. It was Og who first taught the Cave people to carry clubs, and even Ut, his rival, admitted that this was better than throwing stones. Driven by an urge, Og hid himself for hours and wanted to do something with the flint in his hand. One day he stared at a burning rope which he had made, and which he had learned to set on fire. Then his mind went to the fair skinned girl Ou that he wanted for his mate. Ut wanted her too; which would be successful? The two were evenly matched in size and strength, but Og possessed those traits of thinking and humour which the other did not have."

"One day he heard a cry, and rushing out, discovered

Ou, trying to free herself from the hand of Ut who would bear her away to his hut. Og hurled himself upon his rival and both were injured by the other and still the fight went on until some one said: 'Look over there!' All eyes followed the cry and across the canyon, they saw two ghostly figures, one old and tall, the other but a child. The tall one, Father-Time flung a protecting arm about the child, and they disappeared."

"Ou cried: 'Stop! the ghosts are gone. It is an omen. Come to my cave in seven Suns, you two, and I—even I will choose!' 'She will choose! Ou will choose!' cried the wondering Cave people. 'And the one she chooses for her mate—he shall be our chief.' "

"Seven suns! it seemed a long time to wait in the mind of Og. But with her words ringing in his ears, he obeyed an impulse and lighted a new rope of knotted grass, seven times as long as his former ones. Four knots to the day, every fourth knot bigger than the rest, and he had before him a crude but sufficient marker of the flight of time. A low growl of satisfaction rumbled in his throat. He had taken an upward step; he had invented something."

"Five suns passed, although the big sun had been obscured by clouds and fog, but five of the big knots had smouldered into ashes in Og's cave. But while he was thinking and working on some more knots, Ut was boasting that the seven suns were past. 'Og has forgotten,' he cried. 'Og is afraid. Ou belongs to Ut.'

"But Ou hung back, and she kept thinking and looking toward Og's cave—as if her eyes would summon him. And he came. Grimly he listened while Ut presented his claims. Instead of flying into a rage, Og said,

'Seven suns? No, only five.' He led the tribe to the cave. Many grunts of approval and amazement came when the people saw his contrivance for marking time —eight knots yet untouched, more days to come. Bitter the discomfiture of Ut, as the tribe proclaimed Og the victor and chief of the Cavemen. He heeded them not, but with great arms he caught the beautiful Ou, and the Caveman had found his fate and his timekeeper."

It is a long cry from the caveman to Berous, head of the priesthood of Babylon. But the great obelisk gave the priest drawings and computations that made for the world the sun-dial, spaced into divisions, each one marked with a Chaldean numeral, and showing three hundred and sixty-five days to the year.

A flight of a thousand years brings us to Alfred the Great and the British Isles. Vowing one half of his time to God, he contrives six candles, with notches or colors, into twelve sections, burning one third of an hour to the second. These ingenious timepieces enabled him to fulfill his vow each day.

In Rouén, in Normandy, is the street of the Great Clock. Here in the eleventh century, died William the Conqueror. The bell is treated as a he—as a personality. He saved Rouén when Louis the Young besieged the city in 1150. It was *he* who aroused the citizens for the revolt of the Harelle in 1381—*he,* old Rouvel the Bell. And when Charles the Sixth hammered his way through the gates of the city, almost his first act was to banish the bell, on the charge of treason.

Later, the great clock was finished by Jehan de Felanis, and a new bell was put in called "Cachet-

Ribaut." But sixty years later the old bell was restored to the belfry, and to-day the Great Clock with its old bell is the official timepiece of the most picturesque city of Normandy.

In the sixteenth century Peter Henlein running away from a mob that sought his life found safety in a monastery at Nuremberg. The old Abbot took him in, and said to the lad, "Life is given to us that we may leave the world better than we found it." Two years later Peter Henlein presented the old Abbot with the world's first watch, and he said, "My son, I accept this priceless gift." And then gazing up into the blue sky he said: "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, be this wondrous gift, but to Thy glory—and to the acceptable use of all Thy servants in the generations to come."

The world's greatest opportunity is time. Before man came time was, after he is gone time will be. To-day time is ours; ours to seize as an asset to be and to get. Each day that comes to us brings a clock which is our trust to build into the temple of life. Each hour is a golden possibility that we may use to better the world and to help God. Each day is a grain that we may sow as seed for future good and harvest. Each minute is a bit of coloured glass that we may work into a beautiful mosaic.

Time does many things for us in the way of opportunities one way or another. Let me point out some of these things.

Time is life's freightage, wherewith some men trade and make a fortune, while others suffer it to go away or waste in extravagance. Why should a man save time? Because of its value. Minutes are like gold dust

which is never so fine that it cannot be used, or that loses any of its value. A crown fit for a king can be made out of the sweepings of the goldsmith's shop as well as out of the solid bar.

One of the valued secrets of success is knowing how to economize the fragments of time. An hour seems a little matter, but you can read twenty pages in an hour, and four years of such reading would give the information of *The Encyclopædia Brittanica.* The difference between a savage and a Shakespeare is that for the savage each yesterday is empty. But Shakespeare stands forth surrounded by his yesterdays, each adding a little gold to his experience, observation, reflection and writing.

We are told that out of bits of glass an apprentice made a magnificent window for a great cathedral, when the architect found one short. In the same way men have made much out of the bits of time that have been broken from the edges of a busy life. One of the questions worth asking is: "How are we using our margins of time?"

How about spiritual life's freightage? Is it bearing us on to fortune or defeat? Nothing in this world exists solely for itself. Why shines the sun, or beams the star? Why falls the rain? Why wings an angel down from heaven to tabernacle among men? It is all for the benefit of others. And shall man, who carries within himself possibilities of usefulness and power for his Creator's sake, shall he refuse to use well his time? How are we giving our time to God? Do we give merely a few hurried moments of each day, snatched from the space given to work and pleasure and to rest? Are

we giving the time that counts for the most or for the least? What are we doing when the pulse is quick, when the powers are fresh, and when we have zest and alertness?

The way to look at life is to see it an opportunity to get initiated into the great mysteries of existence and become familiar with the great work of all eternity.

The earth life is the root life, it is the time when we determine when we shall grow, and how the soil shall feed us. We cannot live for the sake of making money alone, for we must leave our money behind us. We cannot afford simply to live to develop our minds, to become shrewd, cunning and wise, because the world to come is not made up of mentalities. We cannot afford to live for fame, for God is no respecter of persons. We cannot afford to live for pleasure only, for the other world is made up of greater things than pleasure.

Time is life's book, out of which some extract wondrous wisdom, while others let it lie unopened and then die like fools. "A good book," said Milton, "is the precious life blood of a master spirit." Range over the library to-day, and see what is there. Hawthorne, Dante, Dickens, Carlyle, Browning, Tennyson, Lowell, Emerson, Shakespeare, Longfellow and many others are there, and of their thoughts no man can rob you. Men have gone to them, and made their fortunes and gained fame. Others let them alone and are unknown in speech or writing. Indians prefer beads to diamonds and wampum to gold. The spiritual untaught, the worldly hireling prefers novels to the Psalms, trash to New Testament teaching.

Time has given us one Book worth more than other

books. It has so much in it about ourselves, from whence we came, who our Father is, the occupation we ought to choose and where we are going. What biographies of successful men! Moses the great law-maker and organizer; Joseph the premier; Gideon the great soldier; David the fine singer; Solomon the wise-man of the world; Paul the philosopher, and John the revealer of world secrets!

You can tell the mind of a person from the books he reads more accurately than almost any other source. And what puts more into man for force, character and moral ability, than the Bible!

Our best institutions are saturated with the Bible. President Coolidge declares that the Declaration of Independence was the product of the spiritual insight of the people. "We live in an age of science and of abounding accumulation of material things. These did not create our Declaration. Our Declaration created them. The things of the spirit come first. Unless we cling to these, all our material prosperity, overwhelming though it may appear, will turn to a barren sceptre in our grasp."

Time is life's tree, from which some gather precious fruit, while others lie down under its shadows and perish with hunger. God has provided for our wants. If we will not take, eat and drink for life, it is because we will not pluck what our Father has planted and placed before us.

"A man who looks toward the light sees no shadow; a man who walks toward the light leaves darkness behind him. People get into darkness by turning away from the light. A house may be dark, but it is not the

fault of the sun. A soul may be dark, but it is not because the light of the world does not shed beams abroad." A soul may be starved, but it is not because there is no spiritual food. Provision has been made for our needs. A man who will not pluck from life's tree, will get no real sustenance of life, although the fruit is there if he will partake of it.

In the spiritual as well as in the natural world, there are wasted seeds, stunted developments, half-grown as well as blighted blossoms, that are a sadness to God and man. Men show by their lives whether they are eating of the tree of life. Too many are starving their spiritual natures while in the midst of plenty. We all condemn suicides as a crime against society and God. But think of the spiritual suicides who refuse to eat of the tree of life!

Time is life's ladder, whereby some raise themselves up to honour, renown and glory, and some let themselves down into the deeps of shame and sin. I read of a boy who had a remarkable dream. He thought that the richest man in town came to him and said: "I am tired of my house and grounds; come and take care of them and I will give them to you." Then came an honoured judge and said: "I want you to take my place; I am weary of being in court day after day; I will give you my seat on the bench if you will do my work." Then the doctor proposed that he take his extensive practice and let him rest. And the banker and the teacher and the clerk and the farmer came and wanted him to take their places. And then there came old Tommy and said: "I am wanted to fill a drunkard's grave; I have come to see if you will take my place in

the world and go about the streets peddling liquor and getting drunk now and then." Then there came a man whose life was spent and disease was upon him, and he said: "I am tired with the fight I am making with this disease, I want to change and go away from such a life, and I would like to have you take my place."

This is a dream that is not at all a dream. For every boy in this land to-day who lives to grow up, some position is waiting as surely as if the rich man, judge, doctor, banker, clerk, or farmer, or drunkard, licentiate, stood ready to hand over his place at once. Which will you choose? Life is a ladder which will take you up or down.

Time is a book-keeper, which when opened will show credits or debits as we have lived. Time neither forgets nor overlooks anything. Indelibly it debits every draft made upon it. It surely keeps the credits. There comes a place where the books are opened and man is found to be a bankrupt or great in resources.

An old baron gave a banquet in his castle. When the festivities were at their height and the great hall resounded with laughter and music, the baron asked an old seer to write on the wall some sentiment suitable for the occasion. While he wrote every dancer stayed for a moment and strained their eyes to follow the hand of the writer. And, lo! these words were written: "THIS TOO SHALL PASS AWAY!"

All our physical achievements shall pass away. The merchant goes, his money is divided and in a little time his name is expunged from the sign. The mighty political man rules for awhile, but his machine breaks, and another takes his place.

"We have achieved some position, but already it is being spoken for, another would take our place. Some man achieves fame, only to see another name taking his honour. An inventor may be a head liner in the newspaper, but ere long his engine will be relegated to the scrap-heap, and another takes its place."

"But over against these there are the things that last. What a man does with his hands goes, what he says with his lips lives; what he is remains. Occupations and social standing, wealth and fame, are the scaffolding; they are taken down, but man's character is the building that is fixed forever. What you are lasts, not what you have. We came into the world with possibilities, we shall go out with facts. Like the stamp of the coin, the stamp on the soul shows where it was minted. The image and the superscription will tell its own secrets." The book-keeper is recording all these things, and some day, all will be seen.

Time is life's chance to look backward and see what we have done; to look inward and see what we are; to look forward and see what we ought to be, and to look at Christ and see what we can be.

There is a poem called, *Losses,* written by Mrs. Frances Browne. It has a depth of meaning for us, if we will weigh its words:

"Upon the white sea land
There sat a pilgrim band,
Telling the losses which their lives had known,
While evening waned away
From breezy cliff and bay,
And the strong tides went out with weary moan.

One spake with quivering lips
Of a fair freighted ship,
With all his household to the deep gone down.
But one had a wider woe,
For a fair face long ago,
Lost in the darker depths of a great town.

There were some who mourned their youth
With a most loving truth,
For its brave hopes and memories ever green,
And one upon the West
Turned an eye that would not rest,
For far-off hills whereon his joy had been.

Some talked of vanished gold,
Some of proud honours told,
Some spake of friends that were their trust no more:
And one of a green grave,
Beside a foreign wave,
That made him sit so lonely on the shore.

But when their tales were done,
There spake among them one.
A stranger, seeming from all sorrow free.
'Sad losses have ye met,
But mine is heavier yet,
For a believing heart hath gone from me.'

'Alas!' these pilgrims said,
'For the living and the dead,
For fortune's cruelty, for love's sure cross,
For the wreck of land and sea,
But however it came to thee—
Thine, stranger, is life's last and heaviest loss.'

But losses are God's challenge to a man to come back and make good again. In this way God gives a man a chance to regain what he has lost. Having yielded to folly and sin; having fallen into the slough of despond-

ency, you can gain solid ground, and have your feet on solid rock. Why not begin life anew! To-day open the book of aspiration and write new resolves and higher ones. In Christ all things can be made new and life offers a golden chance. An hour is not long enough, but it holds minutes enough for a man to repent; long enough to make restitution; long enough to forgive all who have wronged you; long enough for the soul to cast itself on Jesus Christ and be saved. Be like Miltiades who flung his helmet into the thick of the enemy and fought his way forward and won it back again.

Be careful of your time. Time, the parent of possibility, the nurse of strength, the fostering angel of growth. Time, that might be called the hand of God that gives every good and perfect gift, the faithful guide that leads us onward until we have strength to walk alone. Time, that opens up God's great city of light and salvation to all who use it well. Time is your opportunity right now, to choose wisely and well the eternal things of God.

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